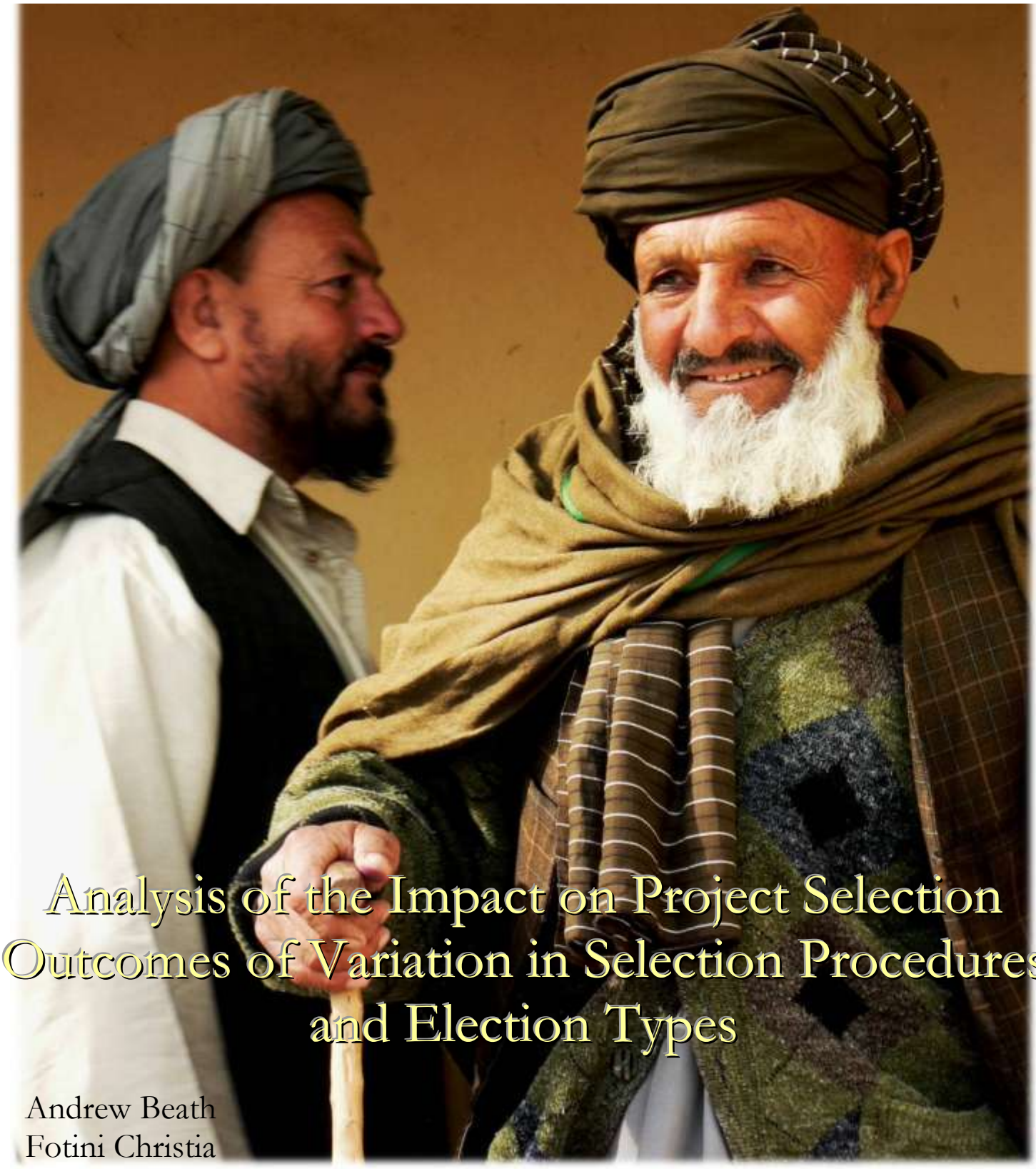
Randomized Impact Evaluation of Afghanistan's National Solidarity Programme (NSP): Sub-Treatment Interventions



Analysis of the Impact on Project Selection Outcomes of Variation in Selection Procedures and Election Types

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Cover Photo: A village elder in Kata Khik village of Balkh district in Balkh province smiles after casting a vote in the 'at-large' election for the creation of the village's Community Development Council (CDC) on November 22, 2007. Photo by Andrew Beath.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This paper presents initial findings of an experiment to test the impact of two different procedures for project selection – consultation meeting and referendum – and two different election methods – cluster and at-large – on the characteristics of projects proposed, selected, and prioritized for implementation under a community-driven development program in Afghanistan. The experiment involves 250 villages across 10 districts of six provinces in northern, eastern, central, and western Afghanistan selected to elect a Community Development Council (CDC) and receive funding for local development projects under the Government of Afghanistan's National Solidarity Programme (NSP). Each of the 250 sample villages was independently and randomly assigned one of the two selection methods and one of the two election procedures, thereby enabling a rigorous examination of the impact of each selection and election type and different combinations of both on project selection outcomes.

Experiment

The paper focuses on a comparison of the results of project selection using different methods of electing CDCs and different methods of selecting projects. A short description of each of the dimensions of variation is provided below:

- **Election Method**: In the experiment, participating villages were assigned to either a 'cluster' or an 'at-large' election. Under the cluster election, a male and a female member are elected to the CDC by each 'cluster' in a village, which is a set of contiguous households grouped together by the election organizers, and accordingly voters are restricted to voting only for people who live within their assigned cluster. Under the alternative 'at-large' procedure, CDC members are elected based upon the number of votes garnered across the whole village, rather than just in a single cluster, and voters have no restrictions on who they are allowed to vote for. In addition, voters in at-large elections are allowed to vote for any three different candidates, while voters in cluster elections only have a single vote.
- **Selection Procedure**: Participating villages were assigned to either a 'consultation meeting' or 'referendum' procedure for selecting village-level projects for funding and implementation under the NSP. In villages assigned to select projects by referendum, a secret-ballot referendum was held, open to all men and women in the village above the age of 18, to determine which projects were to be selected for funding and prioritized for implementation. Results of the referendum were binding on the CDC. In consultation meeting villages, a meeting was convened and moderated by CDC members, during with villagers discussed a variety of proposed projects, with the goal of reaching a consensus as to which projects should be selected. Under this procedure, the CDC was under no obligation to adhere to the outcome of the discussion and held the final decision concerning which projects would be selected for funding and prioritized for implementation.

Results of Project Selection Procedures

Between November 2007 and July 2008, monitors were dispatched to directly observe sub-project selection procedures in 63 villages assigned to select projects using a consultation meeting and in 64 villages assigned to select sub-projects using a referendum. The exercise aimed to provide an independent and systematic accounting of the integrity of sub-project selection and the perceptions of villagers of the selection process. Information was gathered both on the basis

of monitors' observations of the selection process in each monitored village, as well as from 1,238 interviews conducted with villagers following their participation in the sub-project selection procedure. Overall, the results of the monitoring exercise indicated that sub-project selection procedures were professionally executed and that, in general, villagers exhibited a good understanding of the function of the sub-project selection procedure and of NSP.

Experimental Results

The study finds that both referenda and consultation meetings are relatively competitive, as measured by the number of projects selected compared to the number proposed, with no significant differences are noted between different selection or election types. An interesting differences is observed between the two project selection procedures, however, in the magnitude by which project costs were adjusted between the time of proposal and implementation, with villages assigned referenda experiencing a mean cost adjustment three times greater than that of villages assigned consultation meetings. There appeared to be a relatively high level of participation among villagers in both referenda and consultation meetings, although approximately double the number of people voted in referenda than attended the consultation meetings. Interestingly, a very strong association was observed in referenda between the order in which projects were listed on the ballot and their probability of selection, with a project listed first experiencing a selection probability of almost 90 percent compared to a 60 percent probability for a project listed third.

The study observes no general differences between election methods or project selection procedures in the types of projects that are proposed or selected, but does find a significant difference between the two selection procedures in the type of projects which are prioritized for implementation, with electricity projects more likely to be selected for implementation first under referenda as compared to consultation meetings. Analysis of the alignment of *ex-ante* preferences with project selection results indicates that the selection and prioritization of projects was primarily influenced by the preferences of ordinary male villagers, regardless of the type of election or selection procedure. There is also some evidence that preferences of village women also affect the type of project which is selected and prioritized. The influence of male village elites over the selection process is significantly influenced by the procedure used for project selection, with the preferences of such elites coinciding much more frequently with the types of selected and prioritized projects under consultation meetings, as compared to referenda.

Conclusion

The paper focuses specifically on the effects of election methods and project selection procedures on direct outcomes of the selection process and, for reasons of data availability, is not intended to provide a definitive answer on which election and project selection types are most conducive to improving the efficacy of the program in delivering improvements in general development outcomes. It is to this end that it is envisaged that later work, based on new data, will focus on the effects of selection and election methods on other outcomes related to the implementation of NSP and general socio-economic and institutional characteristics and will thereby be able to provide a specific recommendation as to which selection and election types are most conducive to successful implementation of NSP and other community-driven development (CDD) programs in analogous contexts.

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RANDOMIZED IMPACT EVALUATION OF AFGHANISTAN'S NATIONAL SOLIDARITY PROGRAMME (NSP)

Analysis of the Impact on Project Selection Outcomes of Variation in Selection Procedures and Council Election Types[§]

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Abstract: This paper presents results of an experiment implemented across 250 villages in Afghanistan to investigate the impact of two randomly-assigned methods of electing local development councils and of two randomly-assigned procedures for selecting local development projects on the characteristics of projects selected, proposed, and prioritized. Specifically, the experiment contrasts outcomes under a 'cluster election', by which a male and female representative are elected for each section of the village, against an 'at-large election', under which council representatives are elected across the entire village, and under a 'consultation meeting', at which villagers discuss and debate alternative projects, compared to a binding secret-ballot referendum. The analysis finds limited impacts of election type on the characteristics of proposed, selected, or prioritized projects, but identifies the influence of members of the village elite on the types of projects which are selected and prioritized to be much higher under the consultation meeting procedure than under referenda. Project selection procedures are found to be generally responsive to the preferences of non-elite villagers, although somewhat less responsive to those of female villagers.

I. Introduction

The examination of elite capture of development projects implemented at the village level is a topic of considerable interest among researchers and practitioners in international development, although there seems to be little consensus as to the extent to which it is a problem. While some studies indicate that local elites tend to promote their own preferred projects,[1] others find no evidence for elite capture and suggest that project proposals prove to be equally representative of elites as well as their constituents.[2] This study attempts to contribute to the debate by reporting evidence generated by a large-scale field experiment conducted across six provinces of Afghanistan in cooperation with the country's National Solidarity Programme (NSP).

[§] The authors' gratefully acknowledge support from the Asia Pacific Investment Centre of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the South Asia Sustainable Development unit of the World Bank. Data collection for the study has been undertaken with support from the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan through a grant for Phase-II of the National Solidarity Programme provided by the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank. Please see http://web.mit.edu/cfotini/www/NSP-IE/ for further information and materials pertaining to the study.

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[1] (Rao & Ibáñez, 2005; Owen & Van Domelen, 1998; van Domelen, 2002)

[2] (Labonne & Chase, 2009) finds that households that are more active in the community are in turn more likely to have their desires reflected in community proposals.

Specifically, the study examines the incidence of elite capture of three stages of project selection and identifies, through randomized sub-treatments, the impact of different methods of electing local councils and selecting projects on the influence that different groups of villagers have on the types of projects that are proposed, selected, and prioritized.[3]

In the context of a randomized evaluation of NSP conducted in 500 villages across ten districts of Afghanistan, the authors introduced two sub-treatment interventions which varied the type of election used to compose the membership of Community Development Councils (CDCs) created by the program and method used to select development projects to be implemented by the program in each village. The election-related sub-treatment intervention contrasts a 'cluster' election procedure with an 'at-large' procedure. Under the cluster election procedure, vote choice of villagers is restricted to those persons who live within their assigned 'cluster', or village segment. Under the alternative 'at-large' procedure, CDC members are elected based upon the number of votes garnered across the whole village, rather than just in a single cluster, with voters facing no restrictions for whom they can vote, and are allowed to vote for up to three people in the village. Under the other sub-treatment intervention, project selection was conducted either according to a secret-ballot referendum, or in a consultation meeting convened and moderated by members of the CDC, during with villagers discuss project selection and attempt to reach consensus as to which projects should receive funding.

As both of the two sub-treatment interventions was assigned randomly and independently across the group of 250 villages which were selected both for inclusion in the evaluation and to receive NSP, the experiment is able to provide rigorous empirical evidence of how variation in methods of project selection and electoral rules can impact project selection outcomes, including the type of projects and the projected and actual costs of proposed and selected projects. In addition, as detailed information was collected prior to the selection procedure across the 250 villages from male village leaders, non-elite male villagers, and village women concerning which types of project they believed were most needed by the village, the study is also able to offer a detailed investigation of the extent to which the project selection process is influenced by different groups of villages and how the extent of that influence is affected by different election and project selection types and different combinations of the two.

It is hypothesized that different election procedures will affect the outcome of the project selection procedure mainly by through their influence on the composition of the CDC, although CDC members elected by the at-large procedure are considered to be less likely to become engaged in attempts to manipulate the project selection process owing to the increased competitiveness of the at-large procedure and the larger district magnitude it entails. The impact of variation in project selection procedures on project selection outcomes is expected to be somewhat more straightforward, with the consultation-based procedure granting members of the CDC, and potentially village elites, less control over the type of projects that are selected, but much greater control over the selection and prioritization of projects. For referenda, the opposite is expected to be true.

The study finds that both referenda and consultation meetings are relatively competitive, as measured by the number of projects selected compared to the number proposed, with no significant differences are noted between different selection or election types. However, it is observed that the mean difference between the estimated and final cost of selected projects significantly higher under referenda, as compared to consultation meetings. The study observes no general differences between election methods or project selection procedures in the types of projects that are proposed or selected, but does find a significant difference between the two selection procedures in the type of projects which are prioritized for implementation, with

[3] Similar exercises are performed in (Olken, 2008) and (Labonne & Chase, 2009)

electricity projects more likely to be selected for implementation first under referenda as compared to consultation meetings. Analysis of the alignment of *ex-ante* preferences with project selection results indicates that the selection and prioritization of projects was primarily influenced by the preferences of ordinary male villagers, regardless of the type of election or selection procedure. There is also some evidence that preferences of village women also affect the type of project which is selected and prioritized. The influence of male village elites over the selection process is significantly influenced by the procedure used for project selection, with the preferences of such elites coinciding much more frequently with the types of selected and prioritized projects under consultation meetings, as compared to referenda.

The paper is divided into seven sections and contains two annexes. Section II provides a detailed description of the NSP, the randomized evaluation of NSP, and the variations in election method and project selection procedure. Section II.4 reviews the findings of monitoring of project selection a conducted across a sample of approximately half of the villages included in the experiment, including a summary of both monitors' observations and interviews conducted with male villagers who participated in the selection procedure. Section IV describes the hypotheses of relevance to the study and Section V provides background information on the data sources used to evaluate the hypotheses. Section 0 presents the results of the study, detailing the impact of selection type on the characteristics of proposed, selected, and prioritized projects and the alignment of such with the preferences of different groups of villagers. Section 0 concludes and Annex I includes the guide to the two project selection procedures that was written by the authors and issued to persons involved in organizing project selection procedures in the sample villages.

II. Description of Experiment

The following section presents a general description of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), the randomized evaluation of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) within which the randomized variations in the type of elections and project selection procedures are embedded, and an explanation of the specifics of the variations across the 250 treatment villages included in the randomized evaluation of NSP. Section II.1 discussed the NSP; Section II.2 provides an overview of the randomized evaluation of NSP; Section II.3 summarizes variation introduced in the method by which community development councils (CDCs) created by NSP are elected; and Section II.4 details variation introduced in the procedure used to select projects for funding by NSP.

II.1. National Solidarity Programme (NSP)

The National Solidarity Programme (NSP) was conceived soon after the institution of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan in 2001. The idea was to use the community-driven model of aid delivery, which had gained popularity within the World Bank and among NGOs to deliver services to rural populations in less developed countries,[4] to build the new regime's support among the 80 percent of Afghanistan's population that live outside urban areas and

[4] Known as "community-driven development" (CDD), this paradigm stresses the importance of participatory planning and decentralized management of development projects in order to increase project effectiveness and impact (Mansuri & Rao, 2004). Write (Dasgupta & Beard, 2007), "Community driven development is part of a broader paradigm shift responding to the well-documented critiques of top-down, modernist and authoritarian approaches that have dominated development over the last fifty years. It is supported by . . . three propositions in the literature. The first concerns the ability of decentralization to reduce the inefficiencies of centralized, state-controlled development. Closely related to that is the view that moving the locus of decision making away from central and local government bodies to communities promotes democratization. The third proposition states that the outcomes promised by the first two propositions are more likely in communities with strong capacities for collective action." (p. 230).

whose previous experiences, if any, with previous incarnations of the Afghan state likely did not enamour them to the concept of central government.[5]

NSP, which began operations in June 2003, is structured around two major interventions at the village level. With a view to building representative institutions for village governance and exposing the rural citizenry to democratic practices and principles, NSP mandates the creation of Community Development Council (CDC) in each village. CDCs are created through a secret-ballot, universal suffrage election and composed of an equal number of men and women. The second principal intervention of NSP is to disburse 'block grants', valued at $200 per household up to a village maximum of $60,000, to support the implementation of projects designed and selected by the CDC in consultation with the village community. Projects are ordinarily focused on either infrastructure, such as drinking water facilities; irrigation canals; roads and bridges; electrical generators; or school construction, or services, such as training and literacy courses.[6] NSP is executed by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) of the Government of Afghanistan, but is funded by the World Bank and a consortium of bilateral donors, and implemented by around 25 NGOs, known by the program as Facilitating Partners (FPs).

II.2. Randomized Evaluation of NSP

In early 2007, the first phase of NSP concluded, at which point 17,200 villages in 279 of Afghanistan's 398 districts had received the program. There is no precise estimate of the total number of villages in Afghanistan, but the NSP office has expressed its intention to mobilize an additional 17,450 villages, although phase two of NSP (NSP-II) is proceeding with an interim goal of mobilizing 4,300 new villages over the course of two years. 2,000 of these are located in 'on-going' districts containing villages previously mobilized by NSP and 2,300 are located in 74 'new' districts, which do not contain any villages which have elected CDCs or received NSP funding.

In these 74 'new' districts, financial constraints limited the number of villages that could initially participate in NSP-II to 40. As the number of villages per district often exceeds 40, in many districts the program must be rationed.[7] This rationing and the lack of objective village-level data that may be used to target the program facilitated an opportunity, advanced by one of the authors and agreed with MRRD and the World Bank, to randomly allocate NSP within a

[5] (Ghani & Lockhart, 2008) write that, "[t]he intent of [NSP] was to address the process of democratization from the group level up, in parallel to the process of constitution making and rule writing at the center . . . Villages that were once the sites of neglect or predatory behavior by lower-level government functionaries were turned into the building blocks of a democratic process . . . [NSP] could…become a mechanism for the registration and formalization of property rights and dispute resolution at the village level" (Ghani & Lockhart, 2008), p. 206 – 208.

[6] FPs are expected to provide technical assistance where necessary to help CDCs prepare the CDP, develop project proposals, and to help CDC members develop skills in accounting, procurement, contract management (Kakar, 2005). Not all projects which CDCs may propose – such as construction of mosques, purchase of land, payment of salaries to CDC members, purchase of weapons, or cultivation of illegal crops - are eligible for funding through NSP. Projects which are eligible for funding under the NSP include: transportation infrastructure (roads, bridges, culverts), irrigation infrastructure (canals, small check dams), water supply and sanitation (drinking water wells, standpipes), power (micro-hydropower, solar panels, diesel generators), public buildings (schools, health clinics, public baths), and training (vocational education, literacy). Eligible projects proposed by CDCs are generally approved by NSP provided that they are endorsed through a village-wide consultation process; provide for equitable access; are technically and financially sound; include an operation and maintenance plan; and are funded by the community (including labor and materiel contributions) up to a level exceeding 10 percent of the total cost.

[7] According to a list of villages provided by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) of Afghanistan, the mean number of villages in the 74 'new' NSP districts is 80.

selection of districts in order to enable a longitudinal randomized evaluation of the economic, social, and institutional impacts of the program. Utilizing village lists, the authors identified 23 districts which contained a minimum of 65 villages and were thus deemed suitably large for randomized assignment.[8] From these 23 districts, 12 were eliminated due to unsatisfactory security conditions and one was not contracted, thereby yielding 10 districts in which randomization of NSP and subsequent survey activities could occur.

Although, due to security constraints, none of the ten sample districts are drawn from Afghanistan's southern provinces, the districts otherwise provide a reasonably balanced sample of Afghanistan's ethnic and geographic diversity, with the western (*Adraskan*, *Farsi*, and *Gulran*), central highlands (*Chisht-e Sharif*, *Daulina*, and *Sang Takht*), northern (*Balkh*), north-eastern (*Khost Wa Firing*), and eastern (*Hisarak* and *Sherzad*) regions being covered. The ten districts also provide a representative sample of Afghanistan's ethno-linguistic diversity, with five predominantly Tajik districts (*Adraskan*, *Chisht-e Sharif*, *Gulran*, *Daulina*, and *Khost Wa Firing*), four predominantly Pashtun districts (*Balkh*, *Farsi*, *Hisarak*, and *Sherzad*), and one predominantly Hazara district (*Sang Takht*). The districts of *Balkh* and *Gulran* also contain significant numbers of Uzbek and Turkmen minorities, respectively.

Figure 1: Ten Evaluation Districts

Note: Boundaries of 10 sample districts are marked in red; provincial boundaries in pink; major rivers in light blue; district capitals with small blue stars; and Kabul with a large black star

The seven Facilitating Partners (FPs) contracted to work in the sample districts provide a mix of small and large, international and local NGOs, with three of the districts contracted to People-in-Need (PiN), a Czech NGO; two of the districts contracted to IRC, which is head-quartered in the United States; while a district each is assigned to NPO/RRAA, an Afghan NGO;

[8] As detailed below, the number of NSP villages that would be assigned randomly was limited to 25, with FPs being given the option to identify an additional 15 villages which could be guaranteed assignment of NSP. The threshold of 65 villages was thus obtained from these 15 'priority' villages plus the randomly selected 25 NSP villages and randomly selected 25 non-NSP villages.

InterCooperation, a Swiss NGO; AfghanAid, a UK-based NGO; Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA), an Afghan NGO; and Oxfam U.K.[9]

From each of the ten sample districts, 50 villages were selected by assigned FPs for inclusion in the study. The research team then used a matched-pair randomization procedure to select 25 'treatment villages' from each district – 250 villages in total - to receive NSP following the administration of a 'baseline survey' in September 2007, with the remaining 250 'control villages' being assigned to not receive NSP until after the conclusion of the second follow-up survey in 2010 or 2011.

Within the 250 treatment villages, the authors designed and implemented two sub-treatment interventions, one of which introduced randomized variation in the type of election by which the CDC was elected, with the other randomly assigning two different procedures for selecting projects to the NSP villages participating in the evaluation.[10] The first of these is described in Section II.3, while the second is detailed in Section II.4.

II.3. Variation in Election Type[11]

In villages eligible for participation in NSP, elections to compose the membership of the village CDC are organized and administered by 'social organizers' employed by the contracted FP. The NSP Operational Manual directs FPs to organize CDC elections according to a 'cluster election', but across half of the 250 villages selected for participation in the evaluation and NSP, the authors introduced an alternative procedure, known as an 'at-large election'. These two procedures are discussed further below:

- **Cluster Election**: Under this method, FP social organizers divide villages into clusters of between 5 and 25 families, with the vote choice of individual villagers restricted to those 'candidates' who live in their assigned cluster.[12] Each cluster elects a male and female representative to the CDC, which represent and report to the 'constituents' which live in the cluster. Accordingly, the CDC should contain an equal number of male and female CDC members, with the total size being proportional to the number of families residing in the village. Every resident of the village, whether male or female, aged eighteen years or older, who has lived in the community for at least one year, is eligible to vote in the CDC elections or to be elected for a three-year term as a CDC member.[13]

- **At-Large Election**: Under this method, villagers can vote for anyone in the village they choose and are given three votes to ensure a sufficient number of people are elected to the CDC.[14] In addition to enabling villages to elect to the CDC exactly the set of

[9] Adraskan is contracted to NPO/RRAA; Balkh to PiN; Chisht-e Sharif to InterCooperation; Daulina to AfghanAid; Farsi to C.H.A.; Gulran to IRC; Hisarak to PiN; Khost Wa Firing to PiN; Sang Takht to Oxfam U.K., and Sherzad to IRC.

[10] For each sub-treatment intervention, a detailed set of implementation guidelines were prepared by the evaluation team, translated into Dari and Pashto, and provided to the FPs participating in the study. The Dari, English, and Pashto versions of the guidelines are available at: http://web.mit.edu/cfotini/www/NSP-IE/sti.html

[11] A more detailed explanation of the sub-treatment intervention relating to the election type is provided in the paper entitled "Analysis of Variance in Election Type on Electoral Outcomes" and is available at: http://web.mit.edu/cfotini/www/NSP-IE/papers.html

[12] Under the NSP program, candidacy for CDC elections is strictly prohibited. That is, villagers interested in being elected to the CDC should not campaign in any way for the position. The use of the word 'candidate' here is not meant to imply that any vote-getters in CDC elections engaged in such activities.

[13] The stipulations of the NSP Operational Manual also require that at least 60 percent of eligible voters must cast votes in the election in order for it to be valid.

[14] The innovation of permitting three votes in at-large elections was requested by a number of the participating FPs who considered it a high probability that, if villagers were accorded only one vote in at-large elections, the

candidates they collectively prefer, by providing for CDC members to be elected by the whole village, rather than a single specific area, the at-large procedure incentivizes CDC members to select and prioritize projects that benefit the whole village.[15] On the other hand, however, at-large election systems may not be as effective in ensuring representation for all parts of the community on the CDC.

Under both election methods, the FP is required to first segment the village into geographically-contiguous clusters containing between 5 and 25 families, each of which is to be assigned a unique number of name. Social organizers employed by the FP were further directed to draft a village map with clusters and enclosed dwellings clearly displayed and to display it in a public area in the village. The number of CDC members is proportional to the number of clusters, with each having both an assigned male and female representative. Thus, even under at-large elections, it is expected that clusters will be created and will have a dedicated male and female representative, even if they don't necessarily live in the cluster.[16]

Of the 250 villages across the ten evaluation districts that were selected both for participation in NSP and to be surveyed under the evaluation, half were randomly assigned to elect CDC members through the conventional 'cluster' election procedure (hereafter 'cluster villages'), while the other half were assigned to elect CDC members through the 'at-large' election procedure (hereafter 'at-large villages'). Due to this random assignment of election type across a relatively large sample of 250 villages, it can confidently be assumed that any statistically-significant differences in averages of election results or other outcomes of interest that emerge between villages assigned to each election procedure are caused by the difference in election type.

II.4. Variation in Project Selection Procedure

In contrast with the method by which CDC elections are organized, FPs implementing NSP are given relatively wide latitude to develop project selection procedures that the staff of the FP deem most appropriate. The NSP Operational Manual stipulates that the CDC is required to perform some form of village-wide consultation before selecting projects for implementation, but anecdotal evidence indicates that there is little consistency in the means by which villagers' preferences are incorporated into the selection process.

In the 250 treatment villages, variation in project selection procedures was normalized, with villages being randomly assigned to one of two selection procedures, similar to the procedures described in (Olken, 2008).[17] Half of the treatment villages select projects through a secret-ballot referendum (hereafter 'referendum villages'), with villagers selecting their preferred project from

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number of vote-getting candidates would be less than the number of CDC seats (which is proportional to the number of households in the village), thereby necessitating multiple rounds of voting. The three votes are not ranked in any way, although community members may opt not to use all of their votes.

[15] A type of 'at-large' election procedure is used to elect Afghanistan's lower house of parliament, the *Wolesi Jirga*, as multiple members are elected from each province, which contrasts with the 'single-member district' procedure employed by electoral systems inspired by the Westminster model.

[16] A detailed description of the procedures for organizing cluster and at-large elections is provided in the *STI-1 Guide for Social Organizers*, Dari, English, and Pashto versions of which were provided to representatives of the FPs for training social organizers and other staff in the two election methods and are available for download here: http://web.mit.edu/cfotini/www/NSP-IE/sti.html

[17] These two sub-project selection procedures were developed in close coordination with FPs to ensure they did not conflict with existing norms of NSP implementation and could be successfully administered by FPs with existing staff and training capacities. To guide the administration of the two sub-project selection procedures, FPs were given an implementation manual in Dari, English, and Pashto, which provided detailed guidelines on the principles and procedures of referenda and consultation meetings.The Dari, English, and Pashto versions of the implementation manual are publicly available at: http://web.mit.edu/~cfotini/www/NSP-IE/sti.html. The English version is also included in Annex II below.

a list of potential projects proposed by the CDC.[18] In the other half of treatment villages (hereafter 'meeting villages'), the CDC convenes and moderates a meeting of villagers to discuss project selection, with the goal of reaching a consensus as to which project(s) should receive funding. In contrast with the referendum procedure, however, the final decision is left to the members of the CDC. Further details on both procedures are provided below:

- **Consultation Meeting**: In those villages assigned to select sub-projects according to a consultation meeting, the local CDC is to convene a meeting, open to all villagers and moderated by one or more CDC representatives, to discuss and decide which sub-projects will be selected for funding by NSP. Although the purpose of the consultation meeting is to build a consensus among villagers and the CDC, the consultation meeting procedure leaves the final decision up to the CDC. This is in contrast to the referendum procedure, which of course places the full authority for the decision in the hands of community members.

  At the start of the meeting, CDC representatives have the responsibility to explain each of the candidate sub-projects, noting the expected cost of each sub-project, as well as the expected value of the block grant to be disbursed by NSP. Meeting participants are then to discuss which sub-projects should be selected for NSP funding. The structure of the discussion is left to the discretion of the moderator: CDC representatives may express their opinions first and invite responses from the community members, or they may ask the meeting participants to speak first before giving their opinion. In order to make progress towards a consensus, CDC members may employ informal points-of-procedure (such as a show-of-hands) when appropriate, but no formal or binding vote should be held before, during, or after the meeting.

  Following the end of discussion, the CDC is to meet to decide upon the final list of sub-projects which are to receive funding. The CDC may decide to communicate this list to the participants at the conclusion of the Consultation Meeting or, in the event that consensus between the CDC and community members was unable to be reached during the Consultation Meeting, may alternately decide to deliberate in the hours or days following the meeting to determine the final list. Not more than three days following the conclusion of the Consultation Meeting, the CDC will be required to submit the selected list of sub-projects to the FP.

- **Referendum**: In those villages assigned to select sub-projects according to a referendum, all villagers eligible to vote in the CDC election are given the opportunity to vote, by secret-ballot, for the sub-project they most wished to see implemented. FPs were directed to organize referenda in much the same manner in which they organized the CDC election, ensuring secrecy of ballots, non-interference of voters, and providing assistance to confused or disabled voters. At least 50 percent of eligible voters in the village must vote in the referendum in order for it to be valid.

  The number and type of proposed sub-projects to be placed on the ballot is to be decided by the CDC in consultation with community members. However, in order to ensure that referenda are meaningful, FPs were require to check that the number of proposed sub-projects be at least three more sub-projects that could be funded using the combined value of the estimated NSP block grant and the community contribution and to ensure that all of the proposed sub-projects were practical and eligible to be funded by NSP.[19] In order to facilitate the participation of illiterate villagers in the referenda, FPs were requested to

[18] The referendum is organized according to procedures similar to that used for the CDC election and projects which receive the highest number of votes are selected for NSP funding.

[19] FPs were accordingly requested to ensure that they or the CDC estimated the cost and expected community contribution for each proposed sub-project included on the ballot.

prepare voting ballots which illustrate the proposed sub-projects, with voters indicating their one preferred project out of those listed on the ballot.

The results of the referendum are binding upon the CDC and the community and sub-projects are to be prioritized for funding according to the number of votes they receive. The three (or more) proposed sub-projects which receive the lowest number of votes are not to receive funding from NSP block grants.

It is considered that both of the sub-project selection procedures have potential advantages and disadvantages. The key advantage of the referendum is that it is directly democratic: each villager is given an equal and unimpeded opportunity to express his or her preference as to which project should be selected. However, there are practical reasons why this may not be an optimal selection procedure. A consultation-based procedure, for instance, permits knowledgeable or experienced villagers to share their expertise and, if seated on the CDC, to exercise that expertise in making a final decision. Given that the success of projects may be related to specific factors of which the general village population may not be knowledgeable, it is conceivable that leaving the final decision to the CDC may result in the selection of more appropriate, and ultimately more successful, projects. On the other hand, the consultation meeting procedure may enable members of the CDC to select projects that serve their interests over projects that serve the interests of the general village community, so no one selection method appears superior to another.

The experiment was inspired by and is very similar to that of (Olken, 2008), in which 49 villages in Indonesia were randomly allocated to select two development projects, one selected by the general village population and another by the women of the village, either through representative village meetings or through "direct plebiscites, in which all villagers could vote directly at an election for their most preferred projects".[20] (Olken, 2008) finds that for "the general project, the type of project selected . . . did not change whatsoever as a result of the plebiscite, and there were only minor changes in the locations of these projects as a result of the plebiscite", although, for the "women's project, . . . the plebiscite resulted in projects located in poorer areas of the village", but "resulted in the types of projects being chosen for the women's project closer to the stated preferences of the village elites".[21] Having projects selected through a general plebiscite did, however, cause a large and statistically significant increase in satisfaction with the project and program and in perceptions of the fairness and legitimacy of the selected project and also increased villagers willingness to "contribute voluntary labor or materials".[22]

III. Summary of Project Selection Monitoring[23]

Between November 2007 and July 2008, monitors were dispatched to directly observe sub-project selection procedures in 63 villages assigned to select projects using a consultation meeting and in 64 villages assigned to select sub-projects using a referendum. The exercise aimed to provide an independent and systematic accounting of the integrity of sub-project selection and

[20] (Olken, 2008), p. 2. As with the sub-treatment intervention introduced in project selection procedure in NSP, the "list of potential projects to be considered by the meeting process or by the plebiscite process was generated using an identical agenda-setting process in both types of villages" (p. 2).
[21] (Olken, 2008), p. 3. The explanation offered for this apparently contradictory result is that "elites were more dominant in the agenda-setting process in poorer areas of the village" and so a "shift in power towards poorer areas of the village at the final decision-making stage might therefore result in projects that look closer to elite preferences" (p. 3).
[22] (Olken, 2008), p. 3 – 4
[23] A full accounting of the results of the project selection monitoring exercise is provided by the authors in the "Report on Monitoring of Sub-Project Selection", available at:
http://web.mit.edu/cfotini/www/NSP-IE/SPSP-MR.pdf

the perceptions of villagers of the selection process. Information was gathered both on the basis of monitors' observations of the selection process in each monitored village, as well as from 1,238 interviews conducted with villagers following their participation in the sub-project selection procedure.[24] Overall, the results of the monitoring exercise indicated that sub-project selection procedures were professionally executed by Facilitating Partners (FPs) assigned to the 10 evaluation districts and that, in general, villagers exhibited a good understanding of the function of the sub-project selection procedure and of NSP.

Section III.1 presents an overview of monitors' observations relating to consultation meetings; Section III.2 does the same for villages assigned to select projects by referenda; Section III.3 relays general observations across the sample of monitored villages; and Section III.4 discusses the results of interviews conducted with participants in the selection procedures following the conclusion of the project selection.

III.1. Consultation Meetings

The monitoring exercise found that, in meeting villages, meetings were generally well attended, attracting an average of roughly 70 men and a similar number of women. Villagers in attendance out-numbered members of the CDC by a ratio of ten to one, with an average of seven male and seven female CDC members present. The high levels of attendance did not necessarily translate into a high level of participation, however, with only one out of eight men and one out of 20 women publicly voicing an opinion during the meeting. As is to be expected, rates of participation were much higher among CDC members, with four out of nine male members and one out of every two women expressing an opinion. On average, six projects were discussed during the consultation meeting.

Monitors were asked to report the degree of convergence of opinion among villagers on the proposed projects. In 95 percent of cases, monitors reported that the opinions of villagers and CDC members coincided, while the opinions of male and female participants coincided 86 percent of the time. In 14 percent of meetings monitored, FP representatives expressed an opinion during the meeting and, in 20 percent of monitored meetings, they also spoke at the end of the consultation meeting. However, in only 17 percent of monitored meetings did FP representatives express an opinion during the meeting as to which of the proposed project(s) were most appropriate for the village.[25] In seven out of the 13 cases in which FP representatives expressed a project preference, the monitor deemed that the opinion of the FP representative influenced the outcome of the meeting.

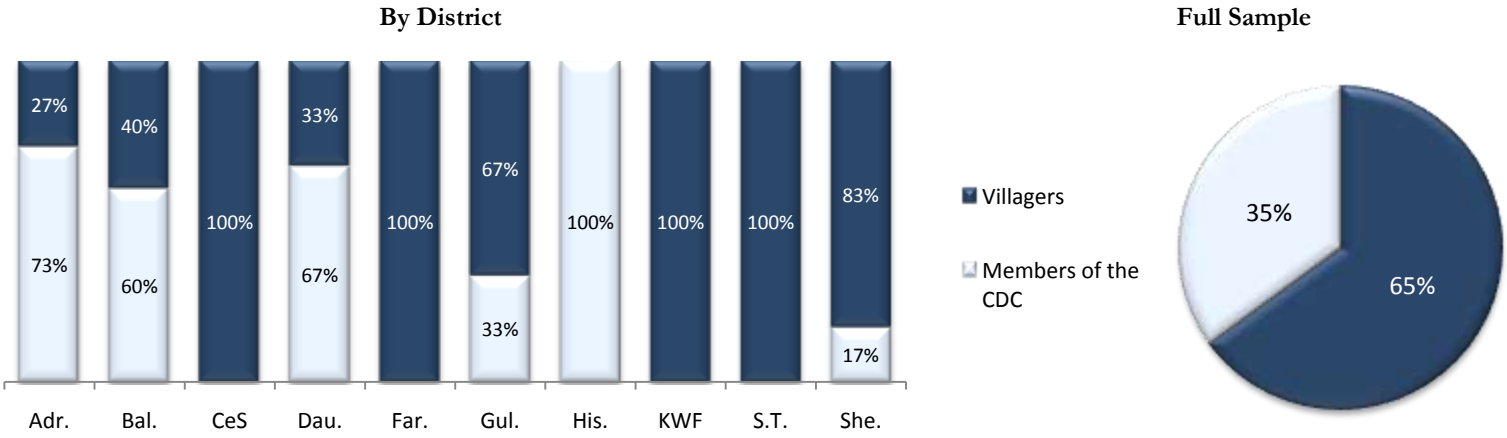
In no villages did monitors report that there were any instances where villagers or members of the CDC were afraid or unwilling to express an opinion different to that of the FP representative present. In none of the monitored meeting villages were there reports that villagers appeared afraid or unwilling to express an opinion different to that of the CDC members or any other person at the meeting. In 65 percent of monitored consultation communities, monitors reported that the villagers – as opposed to the CDC members or FP representatives – appeared to be deciding which sub-projects were selected. There was substantial variance between districts, however. In Chisht-e Sharif, Farsi, Khost Wa Firing, and Sang Takht, monitors reported that

[24] Given the procedural differences between the referendum and consultation meeting procedures, distinct sets of monitoring instruments were developed for each, although a large number of questions were common across both sets.

[25] Instances where FP representatives expressed a preference during the meeting as to which sub-project(s) were most appropriate for the community were reported in two communities in Adraskan (*Hada Wa Mahdan* and *Chah Qala*), two communities in Chisht-e Sharif (*Tagab Ghaz* and *Yak Pahlo*), two communities in Daulina (*Gard Lang* and *Jourayan*), three communities in Gulran (*Tote Che Jamshidi*, *Ziyarat Babay Fawaq*, and *Buzan Hulya*) and one in Sherzad (*Sangar Khail*).

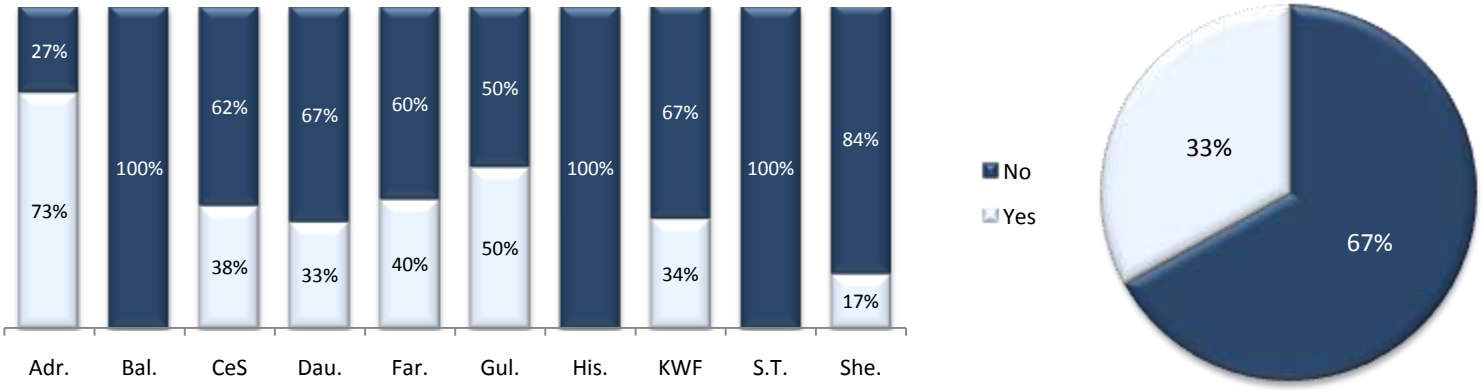
villagers made the decision in all monitored communities. In, Hisarak, however, the opposite was the case, with CDC members being the main force being the decision. Adraskan, Balkh, and Daulina were more or less equally split between meetings where CDC members were more decisive and meetings where villagers seemed to exert the most influence. In Gulran and Sherzad, villagers mostly held sway.

Figure 2: Main Decision-Maker at Consultation Meetings



It was relatively rare for CDC members to conduct additional deliberations following the consultation meeting to decide which sub-projects were to be selected, with this occurring in only one out of three monitored communities. In communities in in Adraskan, Farsi, and Gulran, this happened relatively more frequently.

Figure 3: Incidence of Discussion amongst CDC Members Following Public Deliberations

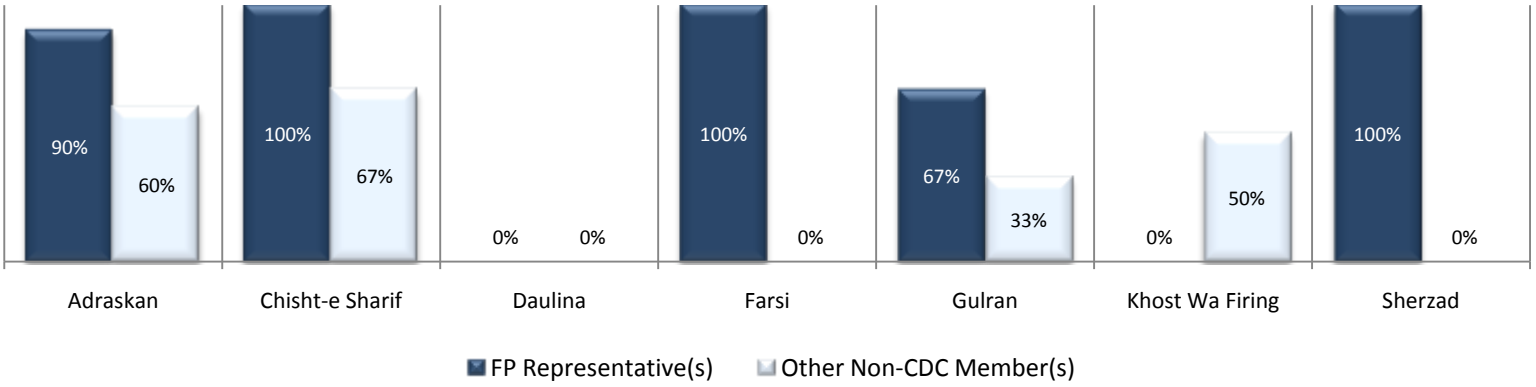


In all but two monitored communities where post-meeting deliberations occurred, these deliberations occurred in public.[26] Across the sample, it was common for FP representatives to be involved in such discussions, with 75 percent of meetings involving FP representatives, although in Daulina and Khost Wa Firing, they were never involved. In 46 percent of cases, discussions involved non-CDC members, although persons not belonging to the CDC or the FP were never involved in the discussions in Daulina, Farsi, or Sherzad.[27]

[26] Exceptions were *Chashma Azizan* in Farsi and *Tote Che Jamshidi* in Gulran.

[27] Out of 23 villages in which a post-meeting discussion took place, in 4 villages, only CDC members participated; in 3 villages, some non-CDC members were involved, but FP representatives did not participate; in 9 villages, only CDC members and FP representatives were engaged in the discussion; and in the remaining 8 villages all types of actors participated.

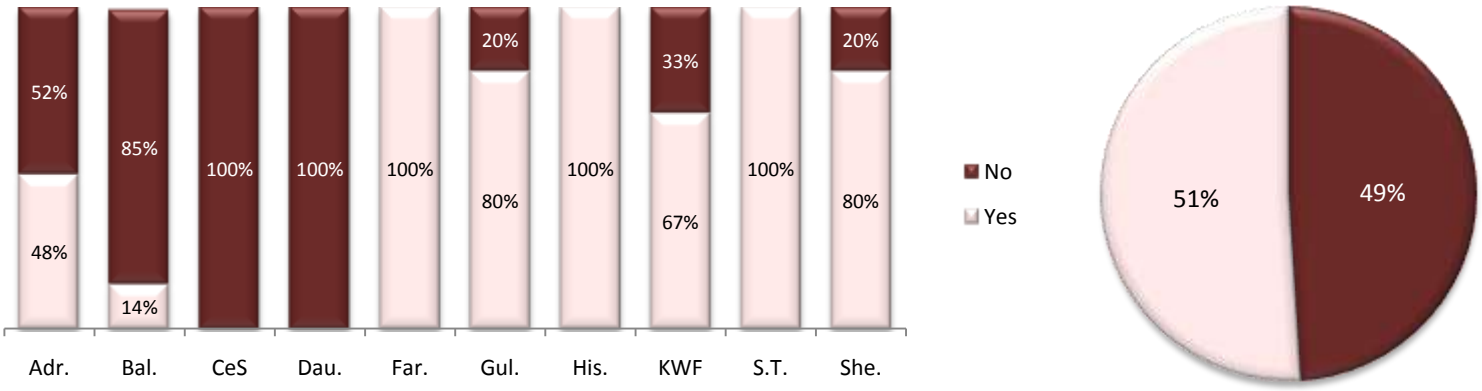
Figure 4: Participation of Non-CDC Members in Discussion Following Public Deliberations



III.2. Referenda

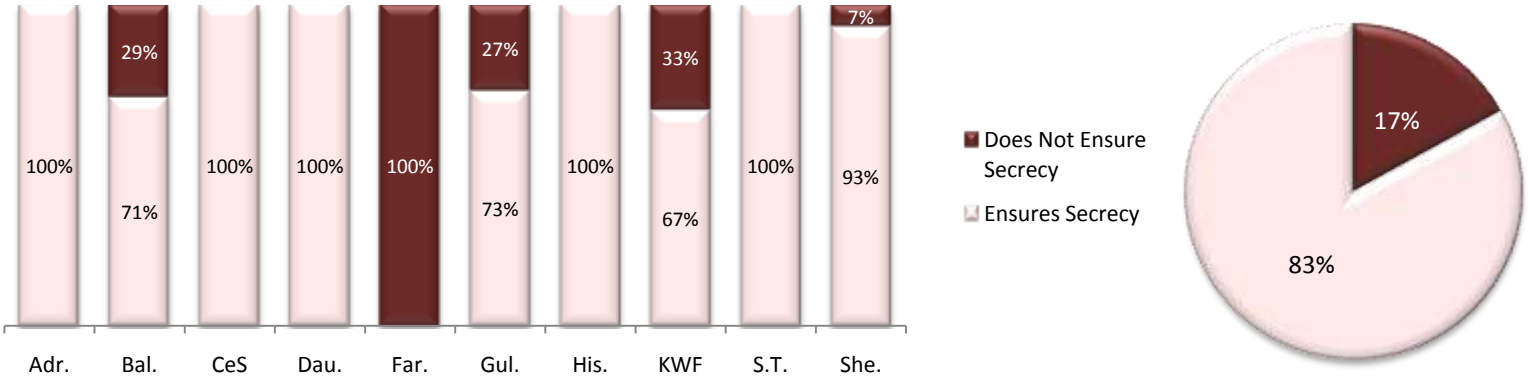
In 74 percent of communities assigned to select sub-projects via referendum, monitors reported that polling stations were staffed by the FP, with polling stations being manned by members of the village community in 19 percent of cases. In 99 percent of monitored polling stations, a list of eligible voters was available and, in 97 percent of monitored polling stations, supervisors checked to see whether the names of voters off against those on the list. In only half of polling stations, however, were the thumbs of those who had voted marked with a pen or ink in order to prevent repeat voting.

Figure 5: Incidence of Inking of Voters' Thumbs



87 percent of monitored polling stations contained separate booths for men and women, and in 83 percent of referendum villages, polling booths were deemed to satisfactorily safeguard voters' privacy. Poorly designed voting booths were noted in six polling stations in Balkh; in all 13 monitored polling stations in Farsi; in 4 polling stations in Gulran; in six polling stations in Khost Wa Firing; and one polling station in Sherzad. In none of the 178 monitored polling stations did monitors report that there was someone at or near the polling station telling people what sub-project to vote for or otherwise interfering with the voting process. In only one polling station in Sherzad did a monitor report having observed something that caused him to doubt whether the voting process was free and fair.

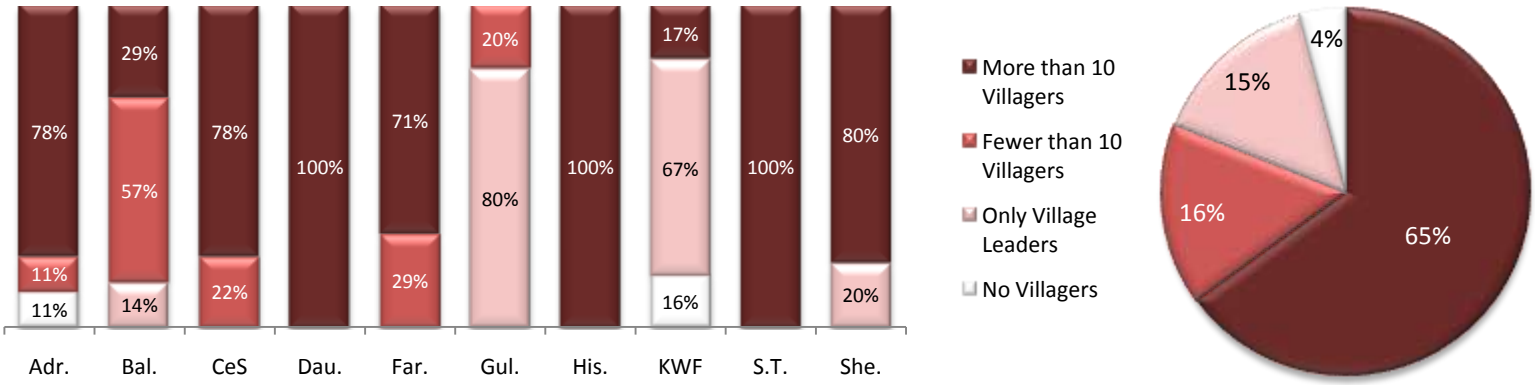
Figure 6: Capacity of Polling Booth to Ensure Secrecy of Ballot



Ballot boxes were usually either a closed box (47 percent) or a closed box with a lock (51 percent). Despite the number of communities with unlocked ballot boxes, in 98 percent of referendum villages, monitors expressed confidence that the ballot papers had been changed prior to vote counting. Vote counting also appears to have been generally fair and transparent, with monitors reporting that villagers were prevented from monitoring the counting of the votes in only 3 percent of communities.

Monitors judged that, overall, vote-counting in the referenda were generally fair and transparent. In 61 out of 63 monitored referendum villages, villagers were in no way prevented from monitoring the counting of the votes.[28] Notably, in one monitored referendum community in Adraskan and one in Khost Wa Firing, there were no villagers who wished to observe the vote counting process even though it took place in a public area.[29]

Figure 7: Number of Villagers Observing Vote Count

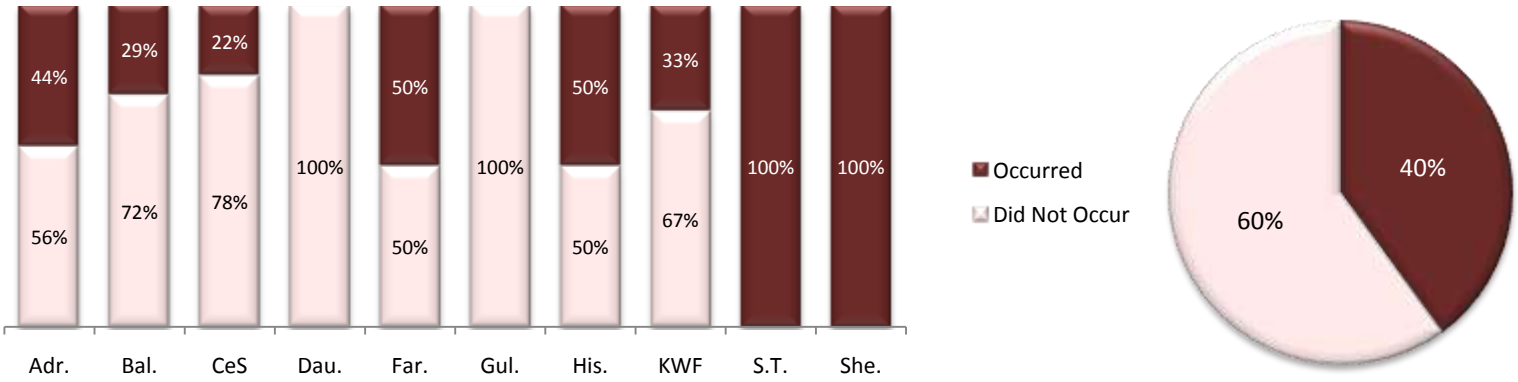


In all 63 monitored referendum villages, those responsible for counting the votes completed a form recording the results of the referendum and the number of votes received by each sub-project on the monitor's form always matched those of the official vote-counters. In every single one of the referendum villages, the monitor noted that the selected projects were the ones that received the highest number of votes, and in all cases, bar village in Balkh, the monitor considered the votes to have been counted fairly. In one village in Chisht-e Sharif, the monitor noted that the community had to settle on a project that was not the one which received the most votes, but this was legitimate as it occurred due to the need to spend the full value of the block grant. In 40 percent of monitored referendum villages, monitors reported that, in order to completely spend the value of the block grant, it was deemed necessary to choose some projects

[28] The exceptions were *Buzan Mabain* village in Gulran and *Bar Khadi Khail* village in Sherzad.
[29] The respective communities were *Chahak* village in Adraskan and *Wareje* village in Khost Wa Firing

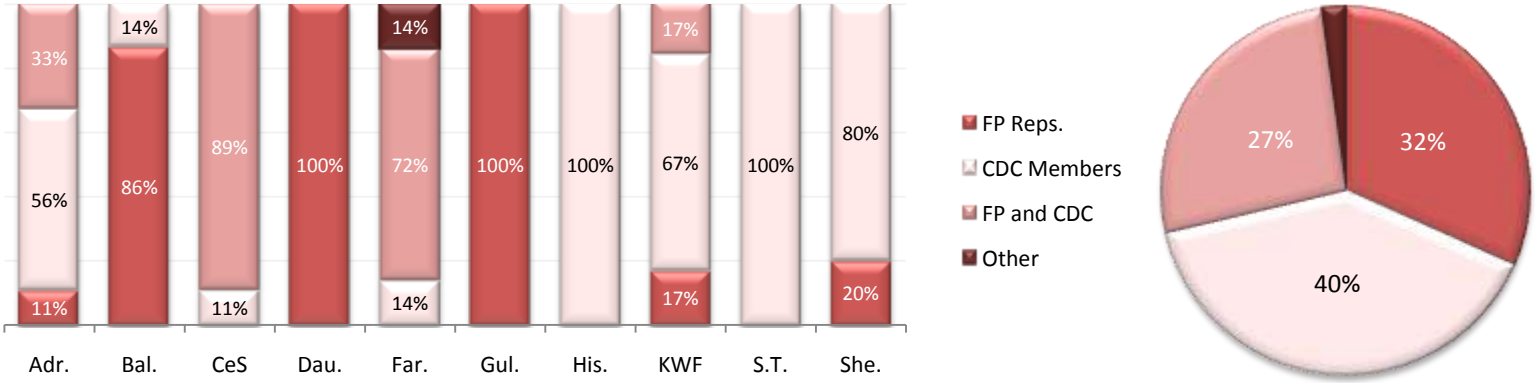
with lesser votes ahead of those with more votes. However, in all the communities where a re-ordering of selected sub-projects was reported, monitors claimed that re-ordering was done in a logical manner and did not appear to be an attempt to subvert the results of the referendum.

Figure 8: Incidence of Re-Ordering of Selected Sub-Projects



In 32 percent of monitored referendum villages, monitors reported that FP representatives were responsible for deciding which sub-projects would be selected based on the results of the referendum, while CDC members held that responsibility in 40 percent of communities, with the responsibility being shared between FP representatives and CDC members in 27 percent of communities. Arrangements differed quite significantly between districts, as is shown in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9: Decision-Maker on Results of Referendum



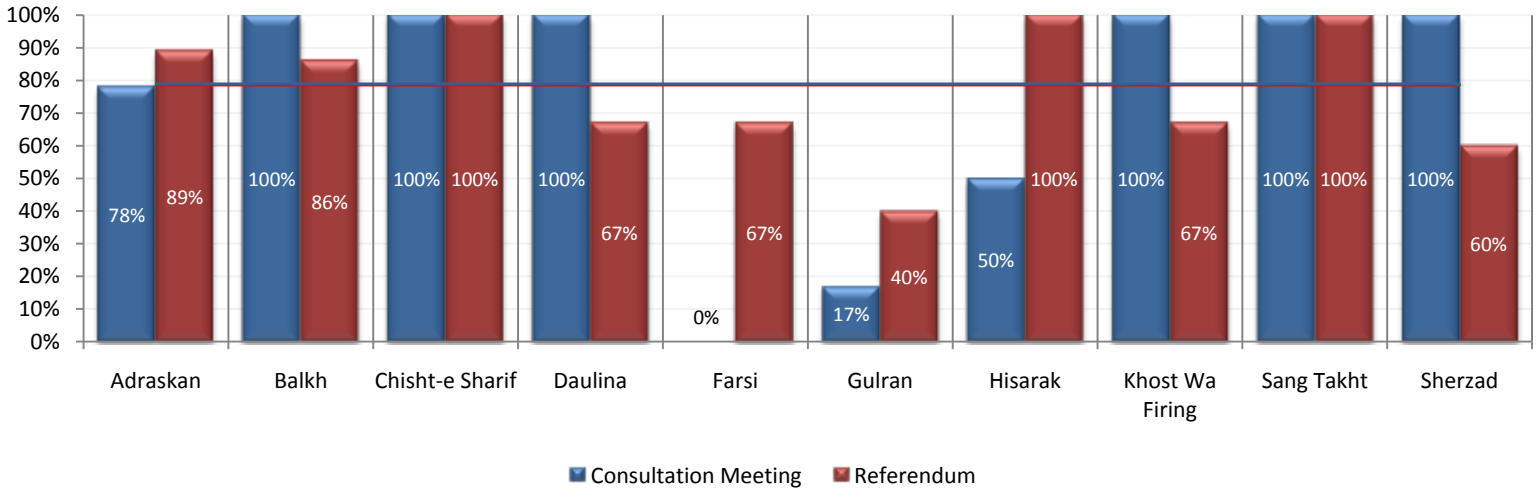
III.3. General Observations

Guidelines provided to FPs for project selection procedures required that the estimated cost of the candidate sub-projects should be factored in to the decision.[30] Across the full sample, this was done in 79 percent of both meeting and referendum villages. Among meeting villages, the costs of candidate projects were not mentioned in five of the six monitored communities in Gulran, two of nine communities in Adraskan, and two of four communities in Hisarak. Among referendum villages, costs were not factored in to the decision as to which projects are to be funded by NSP in one out of the nine communities in Adraskan, one of seven communities in

[30] Specifically, monitors are asked by the referendum report to respond to the following question: "*When deciding which projects are to be funded by NSP, was the cost of each project and the size of the block grant accounted for?*", while the consultation meeting report asks monitors to respond to the following question: "*Was the cost of each project mentioned during the meeting?*"

Balkh, two of six communities each in Daulina, Farsi, and Khost Wa Firing, three of five in Gulran, and two of five in Sherzad.[31]

Figure 10: Consideration of Projects Costs in Selection[32]



Little difference was observed between consultation and referendum villages in terms of the number of selected projects, with an average of four in each case. In 97 percent of meeting villages and 98 percent of referendum villages, the sub-project selection process was completed and selected projects announced on the same day. On average, there were 53 villagers in attendance during the announcement of the selected sub-projects in consultation communities and 51 villagers in attendance during the announcement of selected sub-projects in referendum communities. In Chisht-e Sharif, nearly double the number of people attended the announcement of selected sub-projects in consultation communities compared to referendum communities, while in Hisarak, the opposite was the case. In addition, significantly more people attended the announcement of selected sub-projects in consultation communities in Sherzad than attended it in referendum communities.

Table 1: Number of Villagers present at Announcement of Selected Projects

	Consultation Meeting					Referendum				
	Obs.	Mean	S. D.	Min.	Max.	Obs.	Mean	S. D.	Min.	Max.
Adraskan	9	30	15	15	65	9	43	13	20	60
Balkh	5	38	12	25	56	7	33	44	10	130
Chisht-e Sharif	8	81	39	42	137	9	45	27	15	100
Daulina	6	36	22	15	73	6	40	20	20	73
Farsi	5	43	12	35	60	6	35	14	15	50
Gulran	6	16	13	7	40	5	16	19	5	50
Hisarak	3	51	20	28	65	4	106	46	45	150
Khost Wa Firing	6	78	43	40	150	5	101	33	65	150
Sang Takht	6	57	23	38	92	5	66	21	30	80
Sherzad	6	94	54	55	200	5	59	40	4	90
Total	**60**	**53**	**37**	**7**	**200**	**61**	**51**	**36**	**4**	**150**

[31]These villages were *Hajeyan* and *Gar Khail* in Sherzad; *Touda Chena* in Hisarak; *Wareje* and *Larwan* in Khost Wa Firing; *Pejna Jereb* in Balkh; *Qeshlaq Jaow*, *Nahmat*, and *Buzan Mabain* in Gulran; *Kal Yak Paya* in Adraskan; *Guldamak* and *Kilkak* in Farsi; and *Babaiyan* and *Kota Chashma Maqdal* in Daulina.

[32] The average for the full sample of meeting and referendum villages is indicated by the parallel lines, with the blue line representing the sample average for referendum communities and the red line representing the sample average for consultation communities.

In all of the referendum communities, monitors indicated that the results of the referendum reflected the choices of villagers. In 61 out of 63 consultation communities, monitors reported that the selected sub-projects selected reflected the preferences of villagers at the meeting. In only one referendum community and two consultation communities did monitors report any unusual occurrences during or following the selection of sub-projects.

In 100 percent of referendum villages and 96 percent of meeting villages, monitors reported that the selected projects were those supported by the villagers. The most popular projects in both referendum and meeting villages were those related to irrigation; vocational training or literacy courses for women; drinking water; roads and bridges; and electricity; followed by projects that provide drainage or flood protection. Although the types of projects selected through referendum and meeting villages were generally quite similar, there were some notable differences. Communities that held consultation meetings were more likely to select roads and bridges and community centers, while referendum villages selected fewer community center projects and more drainage or flood protection projects.[33]

III.4. Post-Selection Interviews

This section presents summaries of 1,238 interviews completed with villagers following their participation in sub-project selection procedures across 127 monitored evaluation communities.[34]

Interviewees seemed to be generally well-informed about the purpose of the project selection procedure, although 14 percent of respondents incorrectly replied that the project selection procedure served to draft the community development plan and 5 percent of respondents claimed that the function of the project selection procedure was to elect members of the CDC or something else. Across the full sample, there was no statistically significant difference between referenda and consultation meetings in the purpose ascribed to the selection procedure by respondents. Differences were apparent, however, between districts in the purpose ascribed by respondents to the selection procedure. In Adraskan, Gulran, Sang Takht, and Sherzad, over 90 percent of respondents correctly identified that the purpose of the sub-project selection procedure is to select procedures. In Hisarak, however, only 67 percent of respondents in consultation communities and 80 percent of respondents in referendum communities correctly identified the purpose of the selection procedure. Curiously, 51 percent of respondents Hisarak, 41 percent of respondents in Khost Wa Firing, and 30 percent of respondents in Farsi indicated that the purpose of the referendum was to draft the community development plan. Even more curiously, some 31 percent of respondents in Sang Takht claimed that the purpose of the referendum was to elect the members of the CDC.

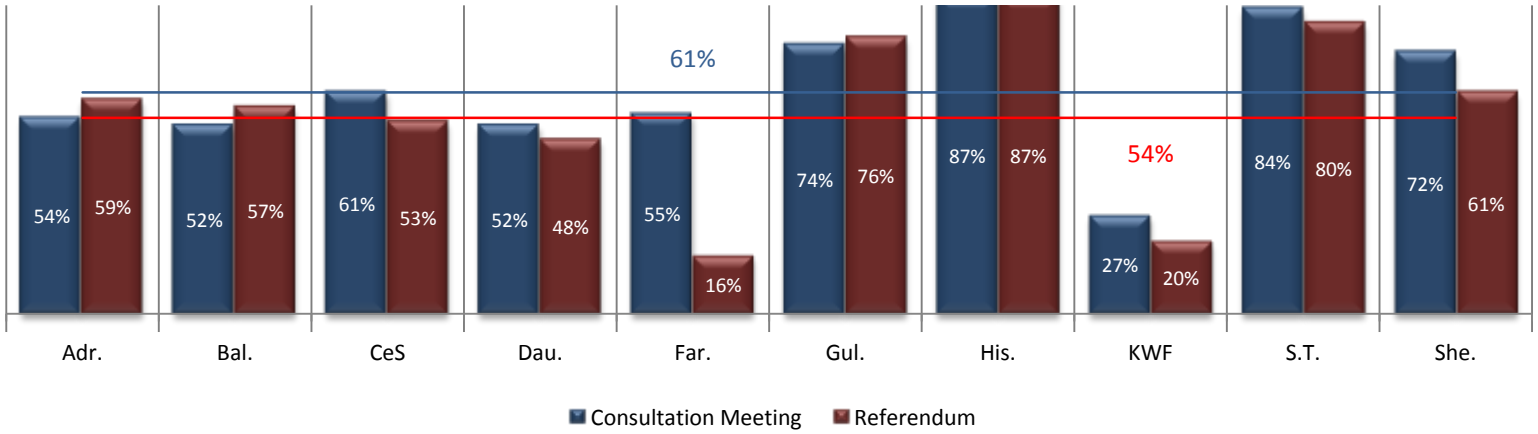
Approximately 60 percent of respondents across the sample claimed to be aware of the value of the block grant that their community would receive from NSP for implementation of sub-projects. There was no significant difference observed between respondents in consultation communities and those in referendum communities, although variation between districts was significant. Respondents in Farsi, Hisarak, and Sherzad were least likely to be aware of the village of their community's block grant, while respondents in Balkh, Chisht-e Sharif, Daulina, Gulran, and Khost Wa Firing were more likely. In Adraskan, Balkh, Chisht-e Sharif, Daulina, and Farsi, respondents were more likely to be aware of the value of the block grant if they lived in a consultation community. In Hisarak and Khost Wa Firing, the opposite was the case.

[33] The difference between meeting villages and referendum villages in the probability of selecting a road or bridge project is significant at the 5 percent level, while the difference in the probability of selecting a community center or drainage or flood protection project is significant at the 10 percent level.

[34] 618 interviews were conducted across the 63 consultation communities and 620 interviews were conducted across the 64 referendum communities.

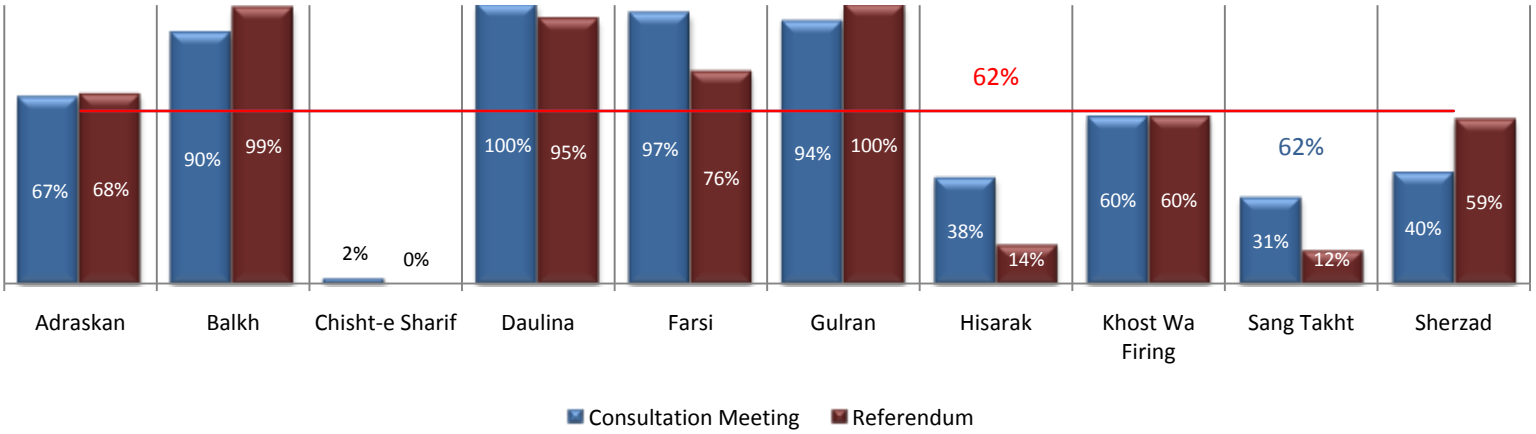
61 percent of respondents in consultation communities and 54 percent of respondents in referendum communities claimed to be aware of their community's Community Development Plan (CDP), which is supposed to be drafted by the CDC prior to the sub-project selection in order to provide the candidate sub-projects to be considered during the selection procedure. The difference between consultation and referendum communities, however, is driven mainly by Farsi district, where just 16 percent of respondents in referendum communities claimed awareness of the CDP, as compared to 55 percent in consultation communities. Respondents in Gulran, Hisarak, and Sang Takht were more likely than counterparts in other districts to claim awareness of the CDP, while respondents in Khost Wa Firing and those in referendum communities in Farsi were much less likely to be aware of the CDP.

Figure 11: Knowledge of Proposed Community Development Plan



When respondents aware of the CDP for their village were asked whether this CDP represented the correct plan for the village, 99 percent of respondents in consultation communities and 98 percent of respondents in referendum communities expressed their satisfaction with the plan. However, when respondents were asked whether any important projects had been excluded from the project selection procedure, a significant number indicated that they were not completely happy with the options that had been presented to them. In both meeting and referendum villages, 40 percent of respondents said that they believed some important projects had been excluded from the selection procedure. Respondents in Balkh, Daulina and Gulran generally exhibited a high level of satisfaction with the options presented by the selection procedure, while, on the other hand, respondents in Chisht-e Sharif were very dissatisfied, as were respondents in Hisarak and Sang Takht, although to a lesser degree. In both Hisarak and Sang Takht, respondents in referendum villages were much more likely to be dissatisfied with the list of candidate projects than their counterparts in meeting villages, while the opposite was the case in Sherzad.

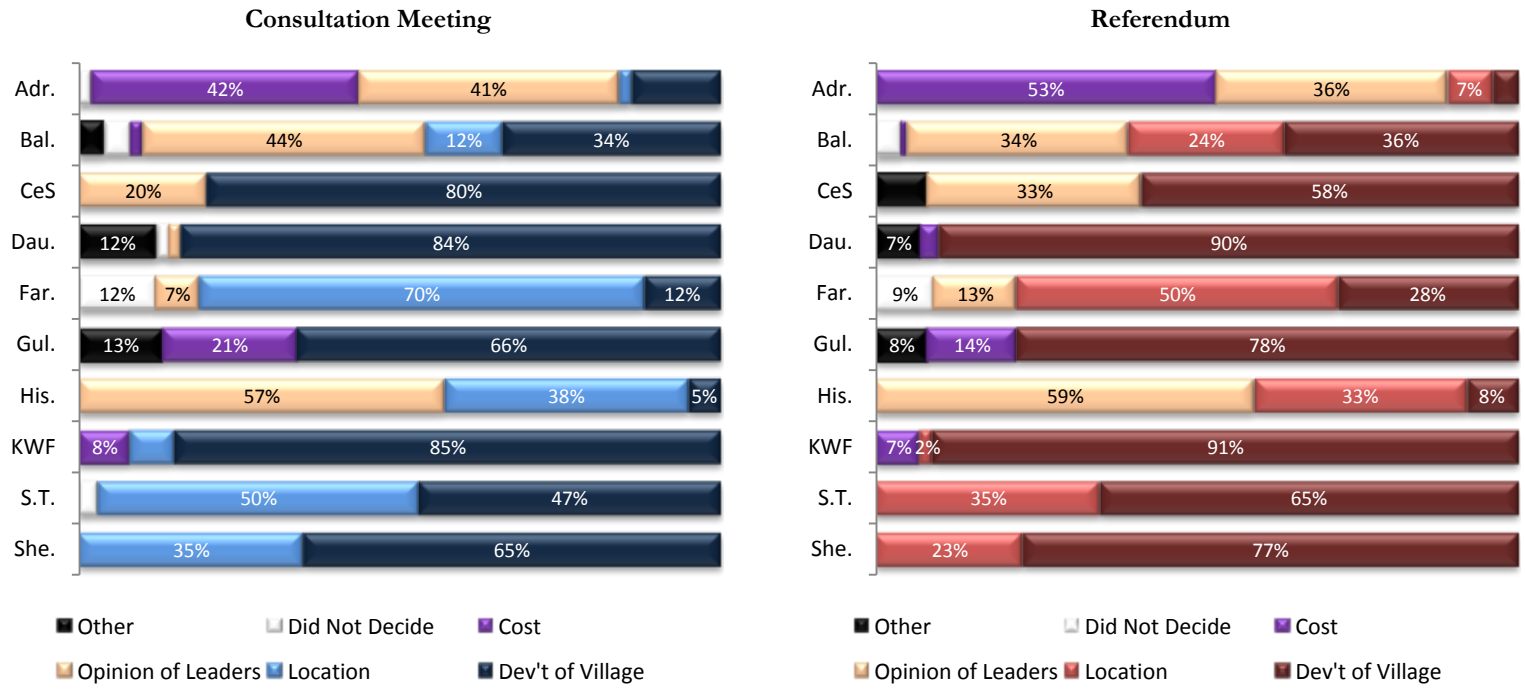
Figure 12: Percent of Respondents Satisfied with List of Candidate Projects



96 percent of respondents in consultation communities and 97 percent of respondents in referendum communities stated they made their own decision of which sub-project(s) to support or to vote for. No respondents indicated that a representative of the FP or district administration had attempted to influence which sub-project they supported or voted for. Across the sample, a slight majority of respondents reported that they decided which project(s) to support or vote for based upon a consideration of which contributed most to the development of the village. This was followed by a consideration of the location of the project, the opinion of village leaders or the CDC, and the cost of the project. A greater proportion of respondents in referendum villages said that they prioritized the contribution of candidate projects to the development of the village when making their decision, a difference that is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

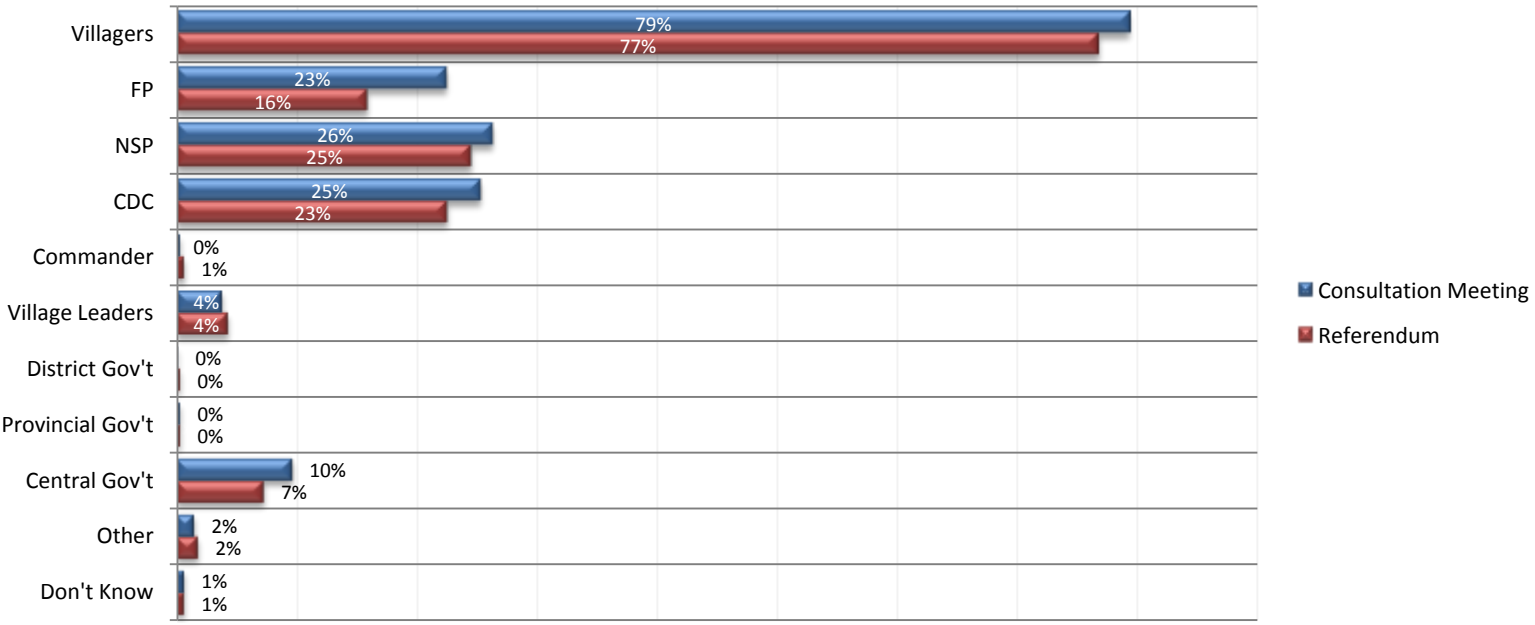
There was significant variation between districts in the main factor cited by respondents in driving the decision of which candidate project(s) to support or vote for. Respondents in Daulina, Gulran, Khost Wa Firing, and Sherzad were most likely to cite the contribution to the development of the village as the most important factor. Respondents in Hisarak prioritized the cost of the candidate project(s), followed closely by the opinion of village leaders. The opinion of village leaders or CDC members was an important consideration for respondents in Balkh and an especially important one for respondents in Hisarak. In Farsi, considerations of the location of the candidate sub-projects tended to be the most important decision. The variation between project selection procedure within districts was for the most part insignificant, with the exceptions in Farsi, where a much greater proportion of consultation meeting participants prioritized consideration of the location of projects, and Adraskan, where a higher proportion of referendum participants said that the cost of projects was most important.

Figure 13: Main Determinant of Preferred Project(s)



When asked who decides which projects are implemented and funded by NSP, 79 percent of respondents in meeting villages and 77 percent of respondents in referendum villages said that villagers make the decision. NSP itself was the next most popular response, cited by 26 percent of respondents in meeting villages and 25 percent of respondents in referendum villages, followed by the CDC, which was cited by 25 percent of respondents in meeting villages and 23 percent of respondents in referendum villages. 23 percent of respondents in meeting villages and 16 percent of respondents in referendum villages said that the FP has a role in the decision, while 10 percent of respondents in consultation communities and 7 percent of respondents in referendum communities mentioned the central government. Only 4 percent of respondents said that village leaders had a role in the decision.

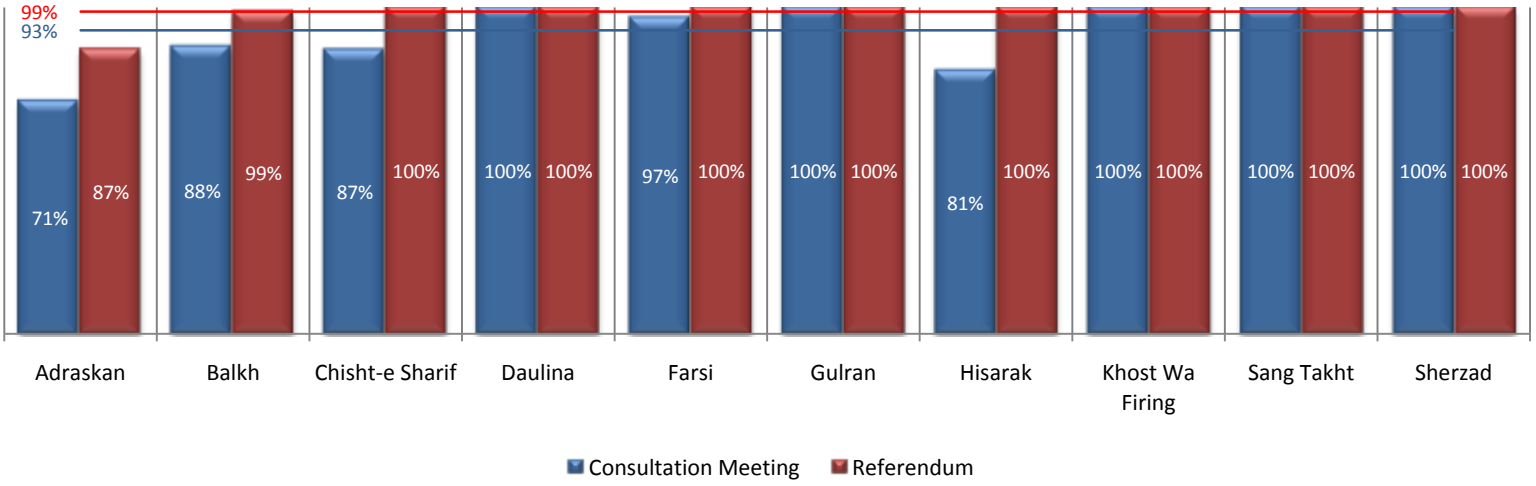
Figure 14: Perceived Decision-Maker(s) on Funding and Implementation of Projects



Although responses were very similar across consultation and referendum communities, significant differences were noticed between districts. Respondents in Balkh, Farsi, Hisarak, Khost Wa Firing, Sang Takht, and Sherzad were the most likely to say that villagers had a role in deciding which sub-projects were funded and implemented, while respondents in Chisht-e Sharif and Daulina were the least likely. Respondents in Sang Takht and Sherzad most commonly ascribed a role for the FP in the selection process; respondents in Adraskan and Sang Takht were the most likely to mention NSP, while the CDC was most commonly mentioned by respondents in Adraskan and Hisarak.

99 percent of respondents in referendum villages and 93 percent of respondents in meeting villages expressed confidence in the project selection procedure, saying that the results of the would indeed determine which projects would be implemented in the village. Respondents in Adraskan, Balkh, Chisht-e Sharif, and Hisarak appeared to not be completely sold, however, with 13 percent of respondents in referendum villages in Adraskan, 29 percent of respondents in meeting villages in Adraskan, 12 percent of respondents in meeting villages in Balkh, 13 percent of respondents in meeting villages in Chisht-e Sharif, and 19 percent of respondents in meeting communities in Hisarak claiming that the results of the procedure would not actually determine which projects were implemented.

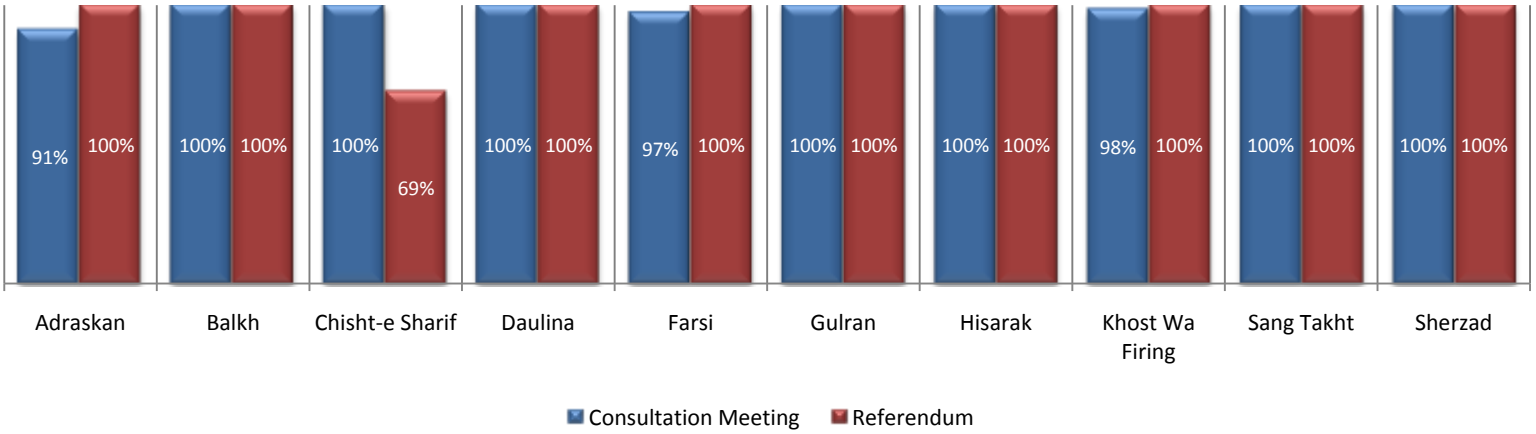
Figure 15: Proportion of Respondents Expressing Confidence in Decisiveness of Project Selection Procedure



Respondents seemed satisfied with the sub-project selection procedure, regardless of whether a referendum or consultation meeting was held in their community. Overall, 99 percent of respondents in consultation communities and 97 percent of respondents in referendum communities said that they believed the sub-project selection procedure was a good one. Only in Adraskan and Chisht-e Sharif did some respondents express dissatisfaction. In Adraskan, nine percent of respondents in consultation communities said that they believed that consultation meetings were not an appropriate way to select sub-projects, while in Chisht-e Sharif, 31 percent of respondents in referendum communities said that referenda were not a good way to select sub-projects.[35]

[35] Only in two villages were the majority of respondents dissatisfied with the process, which is consistent with the comments made by the enumerator, who noted that people in these villages would have preferred to have a consultation meeting, since the advantages and disadvantages of the projects were not properly discussed before the referendum. When asked which form of sub-project selection procedure they believed to be more appropriate, 16 of 17 respondents expressed their preference for a consultation meeting.

Figure 16: Proportion of Respondents Expressing Satisfaction with Project Selection Procedure



Between October 2007 and April 2007,[36] monitors were dispatched to directly observe CDC elections in 65 villages assigned to elect a CDC using the cluster procedure (hereafter 'cluster villages') and 66 villages assigned the elect a CDC using the at-large procedure (hereafter 'at-large villages').[37] The exercise aimed to provide an independent and systematic accounting of the integrity of CDC elections and the perceptions of villagers of the election.[38] In each monitored village, monitors completed four instruments:[39] (1) a "post-vote interview" administered to 1,675 male voters to collect information concerning perceptions of the election process;[40]; (3) three "polling station detailed reports" recording detailed information concerning voting procedures, of which 350 were completed;[41] (3) "polling station reports" to collect basic information on the location and design of polling stations not selected for detailed monitoring, of which 434 were completed;[42]; (2) an "election report" summarizing monitors' impressions of the voting process, of which 131 were completed.[43]

Overall, the results of the monitoring exercise indicated that sub-project selection procedures were professionally executed by Facilitating Partners (FPs) assigned to the 10 evaluation districts

[36] CDC Elections in Adraskan and Farsi districts were conducted between October and November 2007. In Balkh, Daulina, Hisarak, Khost Wa Firing, and Sang Takht, CDC elections were between November and December 2007. CDC elections in Sherzad, Gulran and Chisht-e Sharif were held between February and April 2008.

[37] Within districts, villages were selected for election monitoring in order to ensure balance across time and space, with the monitors visiting elections held early, in the middle, as well as late in the election schedule for the district.

[38] The main duty of the election monitor was to observe the conduct of CDC elections and to interview voters about the election process. In the event that a monitor witnessed a problem with the election, he was instructed to document it in detail. If the problem was determined to be grave -if voting was not taking place at all, if village leaders were intimidating voters, or such - the election monitor was instructed to contact the evaluation coordinator in Kabul. The monitor was explicitly instructed not to interfere in the election process or try to affect the outcome in any way. Although FPs knew their work would be subjected to monitoring, they were not aware when that would happen as the monitoring schedule was confidential, only known by the evaluation team and the monitor.

[39] A detailed description of these instruments is available on p. 6 of the CDC Election Monitoring Report. The CDC election monitoring instruments themselves are available on pp. 25 - 33 of the same report. In order to standardize the monitoring process, the evaluation team provided detailed written guidelines for CDC election monitors, which are available for inspection at: http://web.mit.edu/cfotini/www/NSP-IE/surveycdc.html

[40] Due to cultural sensitivities, it was not ordinarily possible for male CDC monitors to interview female voters, so the post-vote interviews were administered only to men. Of the 1,675 interviews, 861 occurred in cluster villages and 814 occurred in at-large villages.

[41] 183 polling station detailed reports were completed in cluster villages and 167 were in at-large villages.

[42] 247 polling station reports were completed in cluster villages and 187 were completed in at-large villages.

[43] 64 were completed in cluster villages and 66 were completed in at-large villages.

and that, in general, villagers exhibited a good understanding of the function of the sub-project selection procedure and of NSP. The results of the evaluation monitoring also indicate that monitored communities assigned to cluster elections were broadly similar to monitored communities assigned to at-large elections in terms of numbers of households and number of registered voters.[44] However, the results of the monitoring also indicate that the wrong election type was implemented in a number of villages,[45] which marginally reduces the chance of finding significant difference between the election types, even if such differences exist.

IV. Hypotheses

Existing studies of elite capture in community development programs paint a contrasting picture of the extent to which projects are 'captured' by local elites at the expense of the needs of the broader village population. While some studies indicate that local elites tend to promote their own preferred projects, which turn out not to represent people's perceived community needs,[46] others find no evidence for elite capture and suggest that project proposals prove to be equally representative of elites as well as their constituents.[47] This study is concerned with examining both the incidence of elite capture and the extent to which different methods of electing local councils and selecting projects condition elite capture of the project selection process.[48] That is, how different election and selection procedures affect, if at all, the level of alignment between the types of projects that are selected and prioritized and the *ex-ante* preferences of different groups of villagers, such as male elites, general male villagers, and female villagers, for the implementation of particular project types.

As noted in Section III above, two different types of election method – cluster and at-large – and two different types of selection procedure – consultation meeting and referendum – were implemented across the 250 villages included in the study. As the randomized assignment of variation in election types was introduced independently to the randomized assignment of variation in project selection types, the study is able to distinguish between the impacts of not just the variation in different election and selection types, but also different combinations of election and selection type. This section theoretically explores the effects that each type of variation is expected to have on the type of selected and prioritized projects. Section IV.1 considers the effect of variation in election type, Section IV.2 examines the effect of variation in project selection type, and Section IV.3 discussed the expected effect of different combinations of election and selection types. Anticipated differences between variations are outlined below in the form of hypotheses, complete with specifications as to how each hypothesis is to be tested.[49]

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[44] For a breakdown of number of households and number of registered voters by district and by electoral method in the monitored communities see pp.4-5 of the CDC Election Monitoring Report: http://web.mit.edu/cfotini/www/NSP-IE/CDCE-MR.pdf

[45] There are 21 such villages. The list of villages can be found in Annex I.

[46] (Rao & Ibáñez, 2005; Owen & Van Domelen, 1998; van Domelen, 2002)

[47] (Labonne & Chase, 2009) finds that households that are more active in the community are in turn more likely to have their desires reflected in community proposals.

[48] Similar exercises are performed in (Olken, 2008) and (Labonne & Chase, 2009)

[49] On dependent and independent variables, superscripts denote time periods corresponding to phases of data collection: t denotes the period prior to the initiation of NSP activities (i.e., baseline survey); $t+1$ denotes the period during which CDC elections are held; $t+2$ denotes the period during which projects are selected; $t+3$ denotes the period during which projects are undertaken and completed; $t+4$ denotes the period following the completion of projects during which the first follow-up survey is administered; and $t+5$ denotes the period during which the second follow-up survey is administered. On dependent and independent variables, subscripts denote the unit of analysis: i denotes an individual villager; x denotes a member of the CDC or village leadership; and y denotes a village. On coefficients, superscripts denote the reference category to which the

IV.1. Election Method

Under the two types of project selection, members of community development councils (CDCs) who wish to manipulate the project selection procedure to ensure that the selected and prioritized projects align with their set of preferred projects must access different channels. Under a referendum selection, for instance, CDC members wishing to manipulate the selection procedure have the ability to alter the list of proposed projects that are listed on the ballot, but have little opportunity to affect the set of selected and prioritized projects which are determined by the outcome of the referendum. Under the consultation meeting procedure, on the other hand, CDC members have less control over the list of agenda of the meeting and thus over the set of projects which are discussed, but are given final authority to determine the set of selected and prioritized projects.

Under either consultation meetings or referenda, the extent to which members of the village elite can manipulate the selection procedure to their own ends is severely constrained if such elites are not elected to the CDC. Accordingly, the relationship between election type and elite capture of the various stages of the project selection process is strongly linked to the relationship between election type and elite continuity, which is defined as the proportion of pre-identified village elites elected to the CDC.[50] Conditional on the election of pre-existing elites to the CDC, it is theorized that such elites will be more inclined to engage in capture of the project selection process to the neglect the demands of the broader village community under the cluster election method, as candidates under this method are much likely to face contestation and will thereby be less concerned about being held to account by the voters of the village during the next CDC election.

The hypothesis is summarized with the following equation, where the dependent variable measures the probability that the selected project aligns more with the preferences of existing power-holders than with the preferences of villagers, y, the term in brackets represents the estimated coefficient for the effect of election type on elite continuity,[51] and AL is a dummy variable which assumes a value of 1 if the village y has been assigned an at-large election and which assumes a value of 0 if the village has been assigned a cluster election:

$$Sel.-Prior.Align_y^{t+2} = \alpha_y + \left(\frac{Leader.Elected_x^{t+1} - \alpha_x - \varepsilon_x}{AL_y^{t+1}}\right)\beta_1^E AL_y^{t+1} + \varepsilon_y \qquad \text{where } \beta_1^E < 0 \qquad H_1^E$$

IV.2. Project Selection Procedure

As noted in Section IV.1 above, community development councils (CDCs) who wish to manipulate the project selection procedure to ensure that the selected and prioritized projects align with their set of preferred projects must access different channels under the two different selection procedures. Under the consultation meeting procedure, elites elected to the CDC have less opportunity to affect the type of projects that are selected or prioritized, but do have greater influence over the set of proposed projects, whereas under referenda, the opposite is true. This distinction leads to two separate hypotheses which are discussed in turn below:

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hypothesis falls into and the subscript denotes the reference number of the hypothesis within the reference category.

[50] The relationship between election type and elite continuity is explored empirically in an accompanying paper, "Analysis of Variance in Election Type on Electoral Outcomes", which is available at: http://web.mit.edu/cfotini/www/NSP-IE/papers.html

[51] The regression is presented in bullet point four of Section V of the accompanying paper, "Analysis of Variance in Election Type on Electoral Outcomes".

1. **Proposed Projects**: In the project selection procedure, the set of proposed projects is defined by those which are presented for discussion during the consultation meeting or which are included on the ballot of the secret-ballot referendum. Under the referendum procedure, the set of proposed projects is fixed by the CDC members prior to project selection procedure and villagers outside of the CDC have no ability to alter the set of proposed projects. This is not the case, however, with consultation meetings, where it is conceivable for villagers outside of the CDC to propose alternate projects during the consultation meeting.

   Accordingly, it is hypothesized that there will be greater alignment between the list of proposed projects and the projects preferred by village elites under referenda than under consultation meetings. The hypothesis is summarized by the following equation, where the dependent variable measures the probability that the proposed projects in village y align with the preferences of pre-existing village elites and REF_y^{t+1} is a dummy variable which assumes a value of 1 if the village y selects projects through a secret-ballot referendum and which assumes a value of 0 if the village selects projects through a consultation meeting:

$$Proposed.Align_y^{t+2} = \alpha_y + \beta_1^E REF_y^{t+1} + \varepsilon_y \quad \text{where } \beta_1^E < 0 \qquad H_1^S$$

2. **Selected and Prioritized Projects**: For reasons described directly above in Section II.4, referenda should limit elite capture of project selection and ensure that the selected projects better reflect the preferences of the general village public. The hypothesis is summarized by the following equation, where the dependent variable measures the probability that the project selected or prioritized by the selection procedure in village y aligns more with the preferences of existing power-holders than with the preferences of villagers and REF_y^{t+1} is a dummy variable which assumes a value of 1 if the village y selects projects through a secret-ballot referendum and which assumes a value of 0 if the village selects projects through a consultation meeting:

$$Sel.-Prior.Align_y^{t+2} = \alpha_y + \beta_1^E REF_y^{t+1} + \varepsilon_y \quad \text{where } \beta_1^E > 0 \qquad H_2^S$$

IV.3. Interaction of Election Type and Selection Method

The independent and random assignment of the two types of election methods and project selection procedures across the 250 sample villages enables the study to identify how different combinations of election and selection types affect outcomes of the selection procedure. The hypothesized effect is discussed and specified below.

As discussed in Section IV.1 above, conditional on the election of members of the pre-existing elite to the CDC, it is predicted that at-large elections will reduce the elite capture of the project selection procedure. In addition, as discussed in IV.2 above, the referendum selection procedure is hypothesized to result in lower levels of elite capture of the selection procedure. As a result, the combination of an at-large election and referendum is expected to result in the selection of projects less closely aligned with the preferences of the pre-existing elites, although it is unclear whether or not there is sufficient reason to expect an additional interaction effect between at-large elections and referenda. The hypothesis is summarized by the following equation:

$$Sel.-Prior.Align_y^{t+2} = \alpha_y + \gamma_1^N AL_y^{t+1} + \vartheta_1^N AL_y^{t+1} \cdot REF_y^{t+2} + \beta_1^N REF_i^{t+2} + \varepsilon_y \quad \text{where } \gamma_1^I < 0, \vartheta_1^I = ?, \beta_1^I > 0 \qquad H_1^I$$

V. Data Sources

Data used in this paper to test the hypotheses outlined in Section IV above generally comes from two sources: (1) information on the proposed, selected, and prioritized projects in each village supplied for the the ten evaluation districts by Facilitating Partners (FPs) at the request of the evaluation team; and (2) data from the baseline survey for the NSP impact evaluation collected across the ten evaluation districts during August and September 2007 by enumerators employed by the Vulnerability Analysis Unit. Each of these is discussed below.

Information Supplied by FPs

At the request of the evaluation team, FPs working in the ten evaluation district collected most information relating to the characteristics of the proposed, selected, and prioritized projects. Specifically, for each evaluation village, FPs provided information on the proposed projects, including the type, proposed budget, order in which the project appeared on the referendum ballot (if applicable), and whether or not the project was selected for implementation. For selected projects, information was also provided for each on the level of prioritization, or the order in which the project is to be implemented. For meeting villages, information was provided on the number of CDC members and the number of other villagers that participated in the consultation meeting, while information is provided for evaluation villages on the number of male and female votes received by each proposed project. Overall, data was provided for 1,567 proposed projects and 820 selected projects across 235 villages.

Baseline Survey[52]

During the baseline survey of the NSP impact evaluation, which was conducted during August and September of 2007, information was collected regarding the type(s) of projects that respondents would most like to see implemented in the village. This information was collected across all of the four surveys, which covered the following: (1) a male household questionnaire was designed to be administered to ten randomly-selected male heads-of household in each village, covering 4,895 respondents in all 500 evaluation villages; (2) a male focus group questionnaire administered to groups of village leaders and/or members of the village council and involving a total of 5,334 participants; (3) a female focus group questionnaire administered to a group of women who tended to overwhelmingly be wives or other relatives of the village leaders and/or members of the local council, involving a total of 3,670 participants across 496 villages; and (4) a female individual questionnaire administered to the same participants as the female focus group but was conducted on a one-to-one basis, involving 3,398 women in 496 villages.

VI. Results

This section presents some background information on the project selection process, as well as estimates of the impact of selection and election type on outcomes of the selection process. Section VI.1 provides an overview of the process of project selection, detailing the number and cost of projects, level of participation, and the outcome of referenda. Section IV.2 examines variation in the types or preferred, proposed, selected, and prioritized projects by district and by selection and election type. Finally, section IV.3 presents tests hypotheses relating to the impact of election and selection type on the alignment between both selected and prioritized projects and those projects which different groups of participants had expressed a preference for during an earlier survey.

[52] A comprehensive accounting of the results of the baseline survey is presented in the Baseline Survey Report, which is available for download at: http://web.mit.edu/cfotini/www/NSP-IE/BSR.pdf

Both referenda and consultation meetings are found to be relatively competitive, as measured by the number of projects selected compared to the number proposed, with no significant differences are noted between different selection or election types, although large differences are observed between districts. The cost of selected projects also differs markedly between districts, with some differences also being noted between different selection and election types. Interestingly, the mean difference in the estimated and final cost of selected projects is found to be significantly higher in referendum villages. Participation in both selection procedures is found to be relatively high, although, on average, twice as many villagers vote in referenda than attend consultation meetings.

As is to be expected, large differences are observed between districts in the types of projects that were preferred *ex-ante* by baseline survey respondents or which were proposed, selected, or prioritized in the selection procedure. Although no significant differences are observed between election or selection types or election – selection combinations in the types of projects that are proposed, selected, or prioritized, a statistically significant difference is observed in the types of projects that are prioritized under referenda vis-à-vis those projects prioritized under consultation meetings.

Few significant differences are observed with respect to the effect of the different election type on the alignment between the project preferences of the different groups interviewed during the baseline survey and the types of projects that were proposed, selected, or prioritized. However, selection type does appear to have a significant impact on the capacity of male village leaders to influence the proposal, selection, and prioritization of projects they prefer. Specifically, consultation meetings seem to ensure, with greater frequency, that the types of projects preferred by male village leaders appear among those proposed, selected, or prioritized. Across the different election and selection types, the preferences of male villagers appear to have a very strong role in determining which types of projects are selected or prioritized.

VI.1. Characteristics of Selection Procedures

This following section provides information on the characteristics of the two selection procedures. The first sub-section examines summary statistics concerning the number of projects proposed and selected and compares the competitiveness of consultation meetings and referenda and of selection procedures across districts. The second sub-section presents information on the estimated cost of selected and unselected projects and of the difference between estimated and final costs. The third sub-section compares participation in consultation meetings and in referenda across the sample and between districts, while the fourth and final sub-section presents data on the distribution of votes between selected and unselected projects and on the correlation between a project's ordering on the referendum ballot and its probability of selection.

In the median sample village, six projects were proposed, with three being selected. The competitiveness of selection procedures differed little between selection or election types, but did differ sharply between districts. In at-large villages and especially in those villages which combined at-large elections with referenda, the costs of unselected projects were lower than in cluster villages. Selected projects were found to be significantly more expensive than unselected projects in meeting villages, but not in referendum villages, at-large villages, or cluster villages. On average, there as an $800 difference between the costs of selected projects when estimated before the selection project and the final project cost. Large variations were observed between districts and, interestingly, between meeting and referendum villages, with the mean upward adjustment being much higher in the latter. Both consultation meetings and referenda are found to attract relatively high levels of participation, with a median of 113 people participating in consultation meetings and a median of 213 people voting in referenda. In referenda, selected projects, on average, receive four times more votes than unselected projects. A strong negative

correlation is also observed between the order a project is listing on the referendum ballot and its probability of selection.

Competitiveness of Selection Procedure

Across the sample of 235 villages which participated in the experiment and for which data on project selection is available, a median of six projects were proposed and three were selected. As demonstrated in Table 2 below, which presents information by district, election type, selection type, and combination of election and selection type, there is almost no variation in the number of proposed and selected projects between villages with different election or selection types or election – selection combinations. Between districts, however, there is significant variation in the number of both proposed and selected projects, with the median number of proposed projects ranging from 11 in Adraskan to three in Khost Wa Firing and the number of selected projects varying from a median of just one in Sang Takht to seven in Chisht-e Sharif.

Table 2: Number of Proposed and Selected Projects, by District, Election Type, Selection Type and Combination of Election and Selection Type

	Proposed Projects						Selected Projects					
	Obs.	Mean	Med.	S.D.	Min.	Max.	Obs.	Mean	Med.	S.D.	Min.	Max.
Adraskan	25	10.8	11	1.5	8	13	25	2.8	3	0.7	2	5
Balkh	24	7.3	7	0.7	6	10	24	3.0	3	0.6	2	5
Chisht-e Sharif	24	9.8	9	2.8	6	16	24	6.6	7	1.2	4	9
Daulina	25	6.5	6	1.9	3	10	25	3.3	3	0.6	2	4
Farsi	25	5.1	5	0.3	5	6	25	2.0	2	0.9	1	4
Gulran	24	7.4	7	1.9	4	12	24	4.8	5	0.4	4	5
Hisarak	24	7.2	7	1.7	4	10	24	5.1	5	1.4	2	8
Khost Wa Firing	24	3.0	3	0.8	1	4	24	3.0	3	0.8	1	4
Sang Takht	22	3.5	4	1.1	1	6	21	1.7	1	0.9	1	4
Sherzad	18	5.7	6	0.9	4	7	18	2.4	3	0.9	1	4
Total	**235**	**6.7**	**6**	**2.8**	**1**	**16**	**234**	**3.5**	**3**	**1.7**	**1**	**9**
Cluster Election	118	6.7	6	2.7	1	13	118	3.4	3	1.6	1	8
At-Large Election	117	6.6	6	2.9	1	16	116	3.6	3	1.8	1	9
Consultation Meeting	119	6.6	6	2.7	1	16	119	3.3	3	1.5	1	8
Referendum	116	6.8	7	2.8	2	15	115	3.7	3	1.9	1	9
Cluster & Meeting	59	6.5	6	2.7	1	12	59	3.3	3	1.5	1	7
Cluster & Referendum	59	6.9	7	2.7	3	13	59	3.6	3	1.7	1	8
At-Large & Meeting	60	6.7	6	2.8	1	16	60	3.4	3	1.5	1	8
At-Large & Referendum	57	6.6	6	3	2	15	56	3.8	3	2.1	1	9

Note: Differences between means for election type, selection type, and combination of election and selection type are significant at the 10 percent level if italicized; significant at the 5 percent level if underlined and italicized; and significant at the 1 percent level if bolded, underlined, and italicized. Differences for all other means are statistically insignificant.

Detailed analysis of the selection process that, across the sample, there were three meeting villages with only one proposed project, with no alternatives being presented in the selection process.[53] In all other villages, including all referendum villages, there were at least two proposed

[53] This occurred in *Bata Par* and *Pajak* villages in Khost Wa Firing and *Zard Sang* in Sang Takht and represented a clear violation of the procedures required to be followed in the selection procedure, which as detailed in STI-2 Guide for Social Organizers in Annex II below, required that the Community Development Plan, which provides the list of proposed projects, include at least two projects plus the woman's project and that the total cost of the proposed projects exceed the expected value of the block grant by an amount greater than the average value of the proposed projects.

projects. Table 3 presents results, both at the district level and for the various types, of the proportion of proposed projects that were selected. There are no significant difference between villages with different types, but the variation between districts was sizeable. Project selection was the least competitive in Khost Wa Firing, where all of the proposed projects were selected in 22 out of 24 villages and the selection procedure was thereby essentially without meaning for the selection of projects, albeit not necessarily for the prioritization of projects.[54] In Chisht-e Sharif also, two meeting villages and two referendum villages held non-competitive selection procedures. Selection procedures in Adraskan, however, were very competitive, which only 27 percent of proposed projects being selected. Selections in Balkh, Farsi, and Sherzad were also relatively competitive, at 41 percent, 41 percent, and 42 percent respectively.

Table 3: Proportion of Proposed Projects Selected, by District, Election Type, Selection Type and Combination of Election and Selection Type

	Obs.	Mean	Med.	S.D.	Min.	Max.
Adraskan	25	27%	27%	8%	15%	44%
Balkh	24	41%	43%	10%	20%	71%
Chisht-e Sharif	24	72%	69%	20%	44%	100%
Daulina	25	55%	57%	19%	30%	100%
Farsi	25	41%	40%	19%	17%	80%
Gulran	24	68%	65%	17%	33%	100%
Hisarak	24	72%	71%	16%	40%	100%
Khost Wa Firing	24	98%	100%	8%	67%	100%
Sang Takht	21	48%	50%	20%	25%	100%
Sherzad	18	42%	41%	15%	20%	80%
Total	**234**	**57%**	**50%**	**25%**	**15%**	**100%**
Cluster Election	118	56%	52%	25%	17%	100%
At-Large Election	116	57%	50%	25%	15%	100%
Consultation Meeting	119	55%	50%	24%	15%	100%
Referendum	115	58%	58%	26%	15%	100%
Cluster & Meeting	59	56%	50%	25%	18%	100%
Cluster & Referendum	59	56%	56%	26%	17%	100%
At-Large & Meeting	60	55%	50%	23%	15%	100%
At-Large & Referendum	56	60%	60%	27%	15%	100%

Note: Differences between means for election type, selection type, and combination of election and selection type are significant at the 10 percent level if italicized; significant at the 5 percent level if underlined and italicized; and significant at the 1 percent level if bolded, underlined, and italicized. Differences for all other means are statistically insignificant.

Cost of Selected and Unselected Projects

Information on the estimated costs of unselected and selected projects is presented in Table 4 below.[55] No significant differences are observed between meeting and referendum villages in the mean costs of selected projects, but selected project costs are found to be significantly lower in at-large villages.[56] Consultation meetings are found to produce significantly less expensive

[54] This represented a widespread violation of the procedures stipulated for project selection and will be addressed to the concerned FP.

[55] Information on the costs of unselected projects was not available for Farsi, Gulran, and Khost Wa Firing, even though FPs were requested to estimate such costs and report this information.

[56] The difference is significant at 5 percent level for all the proposed projects, but is only significant at the 10 percent level if the standard errors are corrected for correlation within villages. the difference is significant at 10% level for all the proposed projects and not statistically significant for the selected projects.

unselected projects, as are at-large elections.[57] The average difference in the costs of selected and unselected projects is not statistically significant for the whole sample of villages and for sub-samples of at-large and cluster villages, as well as for the sub-sample of referendum villages. However, in meeting villages, the costs of selected projects were significantly higher than those of unselected projects.

Table 4: Cost of Selected and Unselected Projects, by District, Election Type, Selection Type and Combination of Election and Selection Type

	Estimated Cost of Selected Projects				Estimated Cost of Unselected Projects			
	Obs.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Obs.	Mean	Min.	Max.
Adraskan	71	$5,965	$800	$36,000	198	$7,676	$600	$60,000
Balkh	65	$16,787	$2,000	$57,000	102	$19,886	$3,400	$140,000
Chisht-e Sharif	159	$9,000	$176	$55,000	75	$7,724	$242	$66,000
Daulina	82	$6,889	$700	$26,000	80	$9,905	$700	$100,000
Farsi	5	$14,200	$6,000	$30,000	0	-	-	-
Gulran	114	$9,899	$730	$44,800	0	-	-	-
Hisarak	122	$12,360	$1,400	$40,000	48	$10,883	$1,000	$40,000
Khost Wa Firing	69	$21,391	$2,400	$77,267	0	-	-	-
Sang Takht	35	$8,130	$1,589	$35,200	43	$7,571	$324	$24,000
Sherzad	42	$11,068	$3,610	$26,900	55	$6,166	$2,220	$20,000
Total	**764**	**$11,051**	**$176**	**$77,267**	**601**	**$10,162**	**$242**	**$140,000**
Cluster	383	*$11,786*	$700	$77,267	306	$10,989	$242	$140,000
At-Large	381	*$10,313*	$176	$60,000	295	$9,304	$324	$100,000
Meeting	370	$10,986	$176	$60,000	310	*$8,914*	$330	$100,000
Referendum	394	$11,113	$700	$77,267	291	*$11,490*	$242	$140,000
Cluster & Meeting	183	$12,310	$700	$60,000	152	$9,473	$330	$100,000
Cluster & Referendum	200	$11,306	$700	$77,267	154	$12,484	$242	$140,000
A-L & Meet.	187	$9,691	$176	$50,600	158	$8,377	$600	$61,600
A-L & Ref.	194	$10,913	$700	$60,000	137	$10,373	$324	$100,000

Note: Differences between means for election type, selection type, and combination of election and selection type are significant at the 10 percent level if italicized; significant at the 5 percent level if underlined and italicized; and significant at the 1 percent level if bolded, underlined, and italicized. Differences for all other means are statistically insignificant.

In many instances, the final cost of the selected projects differs from the cost of these projects at the proposal stage.[58] Table 5 provides information on the final cost of selected projects and the difference between the final and proposed costs. Across the full sample, the cost of projects experienced an upward adjustment of around $800, although there is a noticeable variation between districts. In Adraskan, project costs increased by nearly $4,500, on average, while in Gulran and Sang Takht, the cost of projects decreased on average, whereas no cost adjustments were reported in Chisht-e Sharif, Daulina, and Khost Wa Firing. No significant differences in the size of cost adjustments are observed between at-large and cluster villages, but a statistically significant difference of $800 is observed between meeting and referendum villages, reflecting that selected projects were more likely to be under-costed during referenda.[59]

[57] The differences are significant at 5 percent level without adjustment for the correlation of errors within villages and at the 10 percent level following such an adjustment.

[58] In Farsi, the majority of projects lack information on the proposed cost, whereas in Khost Wa Firing, information is lacking on the final costs of selected projects.

[59] The difference is significant at 5 percent level with and without adjustment for inter-village correlation of errors.

Table 5: Final Cost of Selected Projects and Cost Adjustment, by District, Election Type, Selection Type and Combination of Election and Selection Type

	Final Cost of Selected Projects				Cost Adjustment for Selected Projects			
	Obs.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Obs.	Mean	Min.	Max.
Adraskan	70	$10,361	$1,405	$56,710	70	$4,483	-$22,663	$40,710
Balkh	71	$16,400	$2,000	$57,000	70	$801	-$20,800	$18,000
Chisht-e Sharif	161	$8,920	$176	$55,000	159	$0	$0	$0
Daulina	82	$6,889	$700	$26,000	82	$0	$0	$0
Farsi	49	$13,655	$1,383	$52,799	5	$1,935	-$5,111	$9,006
Gulran	7	$27,482	$5,680	$59,660	28	-$1,473	-$22,000	$37,660
Hisarak	122	$12,496	$1,400	$40,000	122	$136	-$5,800	$14,000
Khost Wa Firing	16	$24,388	$3,093	$77,267	18	$0	$0	$0
Sang Takht	35	$8,075	$1,255	$23,440	35	-$233	-$11,760	$14,856
Sherzad	40	$15,626	$2,454	$39,600	44	$3,640	-$9,740	$20,600
Total	**653**	**$11,600**	**$176**	**$77,267**	**633**	**$801**	**-$22,663**	**$40,710**
Cluster	324	$12,187	$700	$77,267	314	$811	-$22,000	$40,710
At-Large	329	$11,022	$176	$57,000	319	$791	-$22,663	$27,420
Meeting	324	$11,163	$176	$55,000	311	*$401*	-$22,663	$21,103
Referendum	329	$12,030	$700	$77,267	322	*$1,187*	-$22,000	$40,710
Cluster & Meet.	164	$12,208	$700	$55,000	158	$314	-$20,800	$20,120
Cluster & Ref.	160	$12,165	$700	$77,267	156	$1,314	-$22,000	$40,710
A-L & Meet.	160	$10,092	$176	$50,600	153	$490	-$22,663	$21,103
A-L & Ref.	169	$11,902	$700	$57,000	166	$1,068	-$18,000	$27,420

Note: Differences between paired means for election type, selection type, and combination of election and selection type are significant at the 10 percent level if italicized; significant at the 5 percent level if underlined and italicized; and significant at the 1 percent level if bolded, underlined, and italicized. Differences for all other mean pairs are statistically insignificant.

Participation in Selection Process

Consultation meetings were generally well attended, as shown in Table 6 below, with median attendance of about 113 villagers and 14 CDC members. There was a noticeable variation in median attendance between districts, ranging from 37 villagers to 318 in Balkh, but no significant differences between cluster and at-large villages.

Table 6: Participation in Consultation Meeting, by District and Election Type

	Villagers						CDC Members					
	Obs.	Mean	Med.	S.D.	Min.	Max.	Obs.	Mean	Med.	S.D.	Min.	Max.
Adraskan	13	77.7	61	30.8	48	150	13	12.5	10	3.4	10	20
Balkh	13	30.1	37	16.4	8	49	13	10.7	11	3.4	4	15
Chisht-e Sharif	13	172.2	181	68.9	81	275	13	19.2	20	8.7	10	30
Daulina	12	172.3	123	118.5	68	484	12	22.6	26	7.8	10	30
Farsi	13	189.2	173	95.2	68	350	13	12.8	12	5.6	8	26
Gulran	12	366.3	318	211.2	154	904	12	17.7	16	7.8	10	30
Hisarak	12	148.3	140	68.3	61	280	12	19.4	18	6.8	10	30
Khost Wa Firing	8	46.6	45	14.2	27	74	9	13.8	12	3.5	10	22
Sang Takht	11	119	140	55.2	40	197	11	10.5	10	0.9	10	12
Sherzad	0	-	-	-	-	-	8	16.3	13	7.0	10	30
Total	**107**	**149.8**	**113**	**132.2**	**8**	**904**	**116**	**15.6**	**14**	**7.0**	**4**	**30**
Cluster Election	54	141.3	105	111.6	8	470	57	16.2	14	7.3	8	30
At-Large Election	53	158.4	121	151.0	8	904	59	14.9	12	6.7	4	30

Note: Differences between means for election type are significant at the 10 percent level if italicized; significant at the 5 percent level if underlined and italicized; and significant at the 1 percent level if bolded, underlined, and italicized. Differences for all other means are statistically insignificant.

As demonstrated in Table 7 below, participation of villagers in referendum was even higher than in consultation meetings, with 213 villages casting votes in the median village. Variation in participation between districts was significant, but not as large as in meeting village, ranging from 123 in Sang Takht to 305 in Gulran. Again, there was no significant difference in participation between cluster and at-large villages.

Table 7: Participation in Referendum, by District and Election Type

	Obs.	Mean	Med.	S.D.	Min.	Max.
Adraskan	12	255.8	230	99.7	124	435
Balkh	11	390.8	318	291.9	84	1032
Chisht-e Sharif	11	158.6	142	67.4	59	259
Daulina	13	341.1	292	201.7	107	889
Farsi	12	253.8	201	143.5	69	551
Gulran	12	299.1	305	165.5	43	550
Hisarak	12	127.8	137	45.3	48	180
Khost Wa Firing	13	305.8	295	84.4	202	524
Sang Takht	10	115.5	123	39.2	38	173
Sherzad	10	229.6	232	36.1	162	294
Total	**116**	**251.2**	**213**	**161.7**	**38**	**1032**
Cluster Election	60	248.6	210	153.5	38	889
At-Large Election	56	254.1	223	171.5	43	1032

Note: Differences between means for election type are significant at the 10 percent level if italicized; significant at the 5 percent level if underlined and italicized; and significant at the 1 percent level if bolded, underlined, and italicized. Differences for all other means are statistically insignificant.

Outcome of Referendum

Information on the average number of votes received by projects selected by referenda is presented in Table 8. Across the full sample, selected projects received a median of 30 votes, which is approximately 20 percent of the total votes casted. The median number of votes by village men was higher than that of women (19 compared to 13), although the mean values were

very similar. No significant differences are observed in the number of votes cast in at-large villages as compared to cluster villages.

Table 8: Number of Votes in Referendum Received by Selected Projects, by District, Election Type, Selection Type and Combination of Election and Selection Type

	Total Votes					Male Votes				Female Votes			
	Obs.	Mean	Med.	Min.	Max.	Mean	Med.	Min.	Max.	Mean	Med.	Min.	Max.
Adraskan	34	57.9	38	5	210	18.2	14	0	68	39.6	0	0	210
Balkh	31	127.5	81	1	617	59.4	42	1	247	68.2	46	0	392
Chisht-e Sharif	79	22.1	16	1	89	10.4	5	0	72	11.7	0	0	89
Daulina	45	84.6	50	0	383	79.3	42	0	383	5.3	0	0	72
Farsi	24	65.3	34	10	202	29.4	15	0	97	35.9	24	0	115
Gulran	58	58.7	33	3	363	28.7	19	0	191	29.9	21	0	172
Hisarak	70	20.6	19	0	50	20.6	19	0	50	-	-	-	-
Khost Wa Firing	42	93.7	69	13	212	39.8	30	0	161	54.2	44	5	129
Sang Takht	18	39.8	3	0	136	18.6	2	0	62	21.8	1	0	76
Sherzad	24	61.7	58	0	148	37.9	33	0	78	23.8	16	0	78
Total	**425**	**56.5**	**30**	**0**	**617**	**31.9**	**19**	**0**	**383**	**29.5**	**13**	**0**	**392**
Cluster	215	56.8	31	0	367	32.0	20	0	367	30.2	15	0	210
At-Large	210	56.2	30	0	617	31.9	18	0	383	28.7	11	0	392

Note: Differences between paired means for election type are significant at the 10 percent level if italicized; significant at the 5 percent level if underlined and italicized; and significant at the 1 percent level if bolded, underlined, and italicized. Differences for all other mean pairs are statistically insignificant.

Unselected projects received, on average, almost four times less votes than selected projects, as is shown in Table 9. As with selected projects, the mean number of votes received from male and female villages is similar and no significant differences are found between at-large and cluster villages.

Table 9: Number of Votes Referendum Received by Unselected Projects, by District, Election Type, Selection Type and Combination of Election and Selection Type

	Total Votes					Male Votes				Female Votes			
	Obs.	Mean	Med.	Min.	Max.	Mean	Med.	Min.	Max.	Mean	Med.	Min.	Max.
Adraskan	99	11.1	8.0	0	50	7.6	2.0	0	50	3.6	0.0	0	34
Balkh	49	7.0	0.0	0	283	3.4	0.0	0	143	3.6	0.0	0	140
Chisht-e Sharif	31	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0
Daulina	40	15.7	0.0	0	363	8.1	0.0	0	177	7.6	0.0	0	186
Farsi	38	38.9	40.0	1	108	17.1	13.5	0	52	21.5	19.0	0	56
Gulran	29	6.4	1.0	0	46	1.0	0.0	0	11	5.8	0.0	0	46
Hisarak	22	2.7	0.0	0	9	2.7	0.0	0	9	-	-	-	-
Khost Wa Firing	1	42.0	42.0	42	42	9.0	9.0	9	9	33.0	33.0	33	33
Sang Takht	20	21.9	4.5	0	131	10.3	2.5	0	61	11.7	2.5	0	70
Sherzad	35	23.3	23.0	0	98	12.9	12.0	0	60	10.4	11.0	0	50
Total	364	**14.0**	**3.0**	**0**	**363**	**7.3**	**0.0**	**0**	**177**	**7.2**	**0.0**	**0**	**186**
Cluster	199	13.6	4.0	0	363	7.2	0.0	0	177	7.1	0.0	0	186
At-Large	165	14.5	3.0	0	283	7.4	0.0	0	143	7.3	0.0	0	140

Note: Differences between paired means for election type are significant at the 10 percent level if italicized; significant at the 5 percent level if underlined and italicized; and significant at the 1 percent level if bolded, underlined, and italicized. Differences for all other mean pairs are statistically insignificant.

As demonstrated in Table 10, there is a very strong negative association between the order in which a proposed projects was listed on the referendum ballot and its probability of selection. For a project listed first on the ballot, the probability of selection is almost 90 percent, falling to 70 percent for the second project listed, and 58 percent for the third. Possible explanations for the correlation are that the most popular projects are likely to listed first or alternatively that voters are just more likely to select the first options they come across in the list (the so-called 'pure order' effect). Although available data does not allow us to distinguish between the two explanations, both of them are likely to play a role.[60] In either case the results suggest that those organizing the referenda can influence the results of the selection by manipulating the order in which the projects are listed in the ballot.

Table 10: Probability of Selection and Order of Proposed Projects

Order of Project on Ballot	Probability of Selection	Number of Observations
First	89%	259
Second	70%	256
Third	58%	246
Fourth	42%	205
Fifth	38%	180
Sixth	30%	135
Seventh	24%	100
Eighth	25%	61
Ninth	18%	39

VI.2. Types of Preferred, Proposed, and Selected Projects

This purpose of this section is to present information on the specific types of projects that were preferred by different village groups prior to the project selection procedure, the types of projects that were proposed during the selection procedure, the types of projects that were selected, and the types of projects which were prioritized for implementation first. The first sub-section describes, both across the full sample and for each of the ten districts, the types of projects which male head-of-household respondents, male focus group respondents, and female respondents identified as being the most important for their village. The second sub-section describes the types of projects which were proposed during the selection procedure, both at the aggregate and district level, and examines differences between election and selection types and election – selection combinations. The third and fourth sub-sections do the same respectively for selection projects and prioritized projects.

Noticeable differences between both districts and respondent groups were observed in the types of preferred projects. Female and, to a lesser extent, male heads-of-households respondents listed drinking water projects as their most preferred type, while male focus group participants did not, in the aggregate, cite a project which was overwhelmingly preferred over the other options. Among all three groups, educational and health facilities were cited as preferred projects with relative frequency, while projects focused on roads and bridges and irrigation were mentioned commonly by both groups of male respondents, but relatively infrequently by women.

[60] Such 'pure order' effects have been observed in other contexts. (Meredith & Salant, 2007), for instance, present empirical evidence that "ballot order significantly affects the results" of district local elections in California.

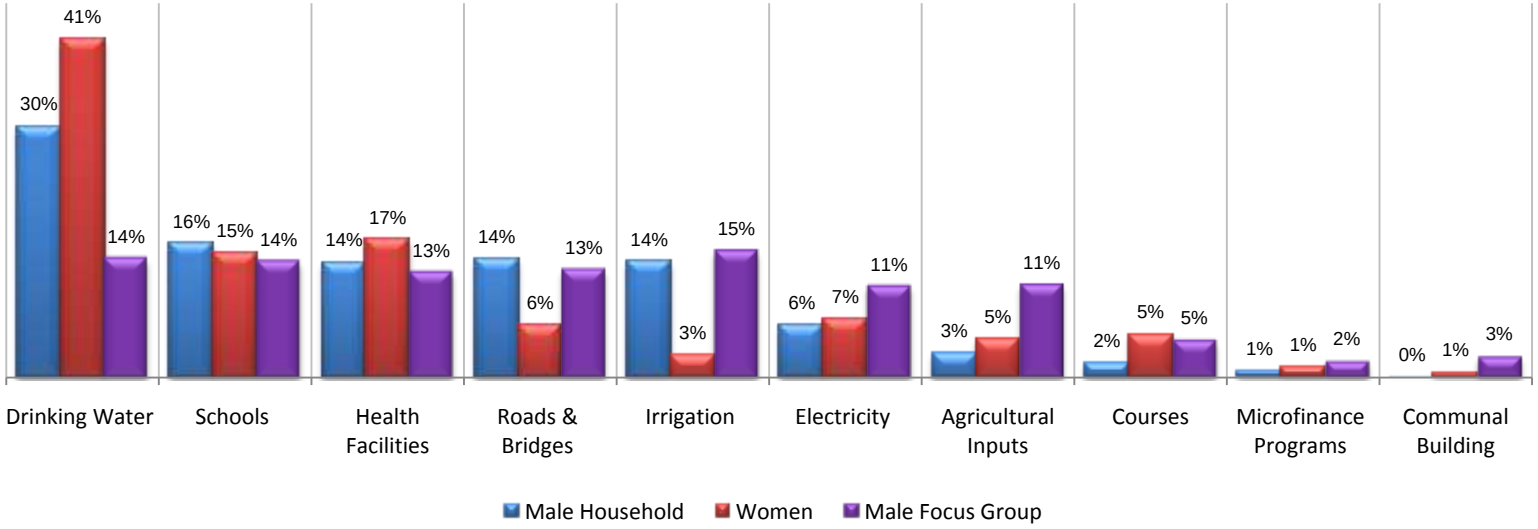
At the project proposal stage, women's courses were the most common type of project, accounting for just less than a quarter of the total number of projects proposed, followed by roads and bridges (21 percent), irrigation (15 percent), and drinking water (15 percent). Large differences were observed between districts in the type of projects proposed, but no significant differences were apparent between the election or selection types or between the four election – selection combinations. Selected projects were overwhelmingly composed of either roads and bridges (23 percent), women's courses (22 percent), drinking water (20 percent), irrigation (15 percent), or electricity (14 percent). As with proposed projects, large differences were observed between districts, but no statistically significant differences were observed between election or selection types or election – selection combinations. Prioritized projects are usually focused on either electricity (28 percent), drinking water (25 percent), irrigation (22 percent), or roads and bridges (21 percent). Significant differences are noted both between districts and between different selection types, with referendum villages being more likely to select electricity projects and less likely to select drinking water projects. Villages which held cluster elections and selected projects by consultation meeting are also observed to have a significantly different mix of prioritized projects compared to the other three election – selection combinations.

Preferred Projects

The baseline survey, which was administered across the 250 villages included in the election and selection types experiments between August and September 2007, posed a hypothetical question in which respondents were asked to select, from a list of potential projects, the development projects they believed that the village most needed. Male focus group respondents were asked to only identify one project, while male head-of-household and female respondents were asked to select and prioritize three projects.

The proportion of respondents from each of the three respondent groups that selected each of the main categories of projects as the project most needed by their village is presented in Figure 17 below. Among male household respondents, drinking water projects were the most frequently preferred as the most important project, accounting for 30 percent of respondents, followed by schools (16 percent), health facilities (14 percent), roads and bridges (14 percent), and irrigation (14 percent). Drinking water projects were also the most frequently preferred by female respondents, accounting for 41 percent of the sample, followed by health facilities (17 percent), and schools (15 percent). Projects preferred by male focus group respondents were relatively evenly split among the various options, with irrigation being the most commonly cited at 15 percent, followed by drinking water (14 percent), schools (14 percent), health facilities (13 percent), electricity (11 percent), and agricultural inputs, such as seeds and machinery (11 percent).

Figure 17: Types of Preferred Projects by Respondents Type



Information on the district-level breakdowns for each of the three respondent groups is provided in the respective sections below.

Male Head-of-Household Respondents

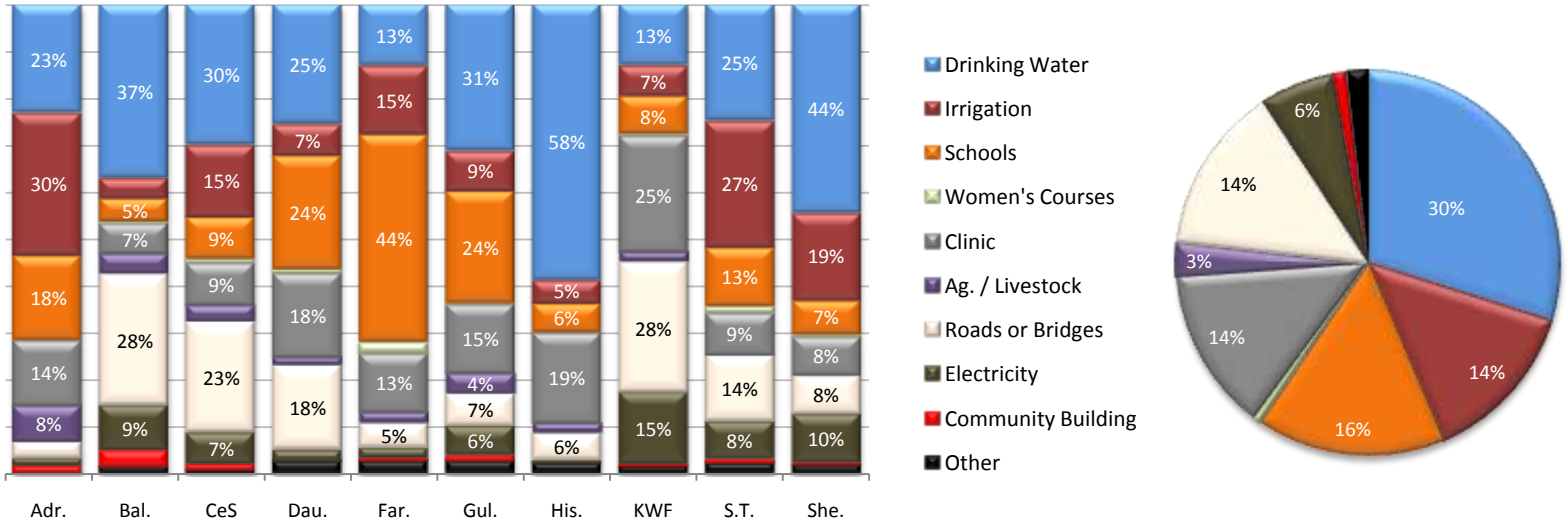
The proportion of male head-of-household respondents in each district that cited the various options as the project most needed by the village is presented in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Types of Projects Preferred by Male Household Heads, by District

	Adr.	Bal.	CeS	Dau.	Far.	Gul.	His.	KWF	S.T.	She.	Total
Drinking Water	23%	37%	30%	25%	13%	31%	58%	13%	25%	44%	**30%**
Schools	18%	5%	9%	24%	44%	24%	6%	8%	13%	7%	**16%**
Roads or Bridges	3%	28%	23%	18%	5%	7%	6%	28%	14%	8%	**14%**
Irrigation	30%	4%	15%	7%	15%	9%	5%	7%	27%	19%	**14%**
Clinic / Health Facilities	14%	7%	9%	18%	13%	15%	19%	25%	9%	8%	**14%**
Electricity	2%	10%	7%	3%	2%	6%	1%	15%	8%	10%	**6%**
Agricultural Equipment	4%	2%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**1%**
Livestock	4%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	**1%**
Mosque	2%	3%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	**1%**
Men's Courses	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%	**1%**
Women's Courses	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	**1%**
Seeds	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	**1%**
Microfinance Programs	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	**1%**
Health / Hygiene Courses	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	**0%**
Toilet Facilities	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**0%**
Community Center	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**0%**

A graphical representation of the above information is presented in Figure 18, which shows that there is significant variation between districts in the type of project identified as being the most important by male heads of household. For example, drinking water projects were indicated as the most important by 58 percent of the respondents in Hisarak and 44 percent in Sherzad, but only by 13 percent in Farsi and Khost Wa Firing. For irrigation projects the support varies from 30 percent in Adraskan and 27 percent in Sang Takht to only 4 percent in Balkh.

Figure 18: Types of Projects Preferred by Male Household Heads, by District



Male Focus Group Respondents

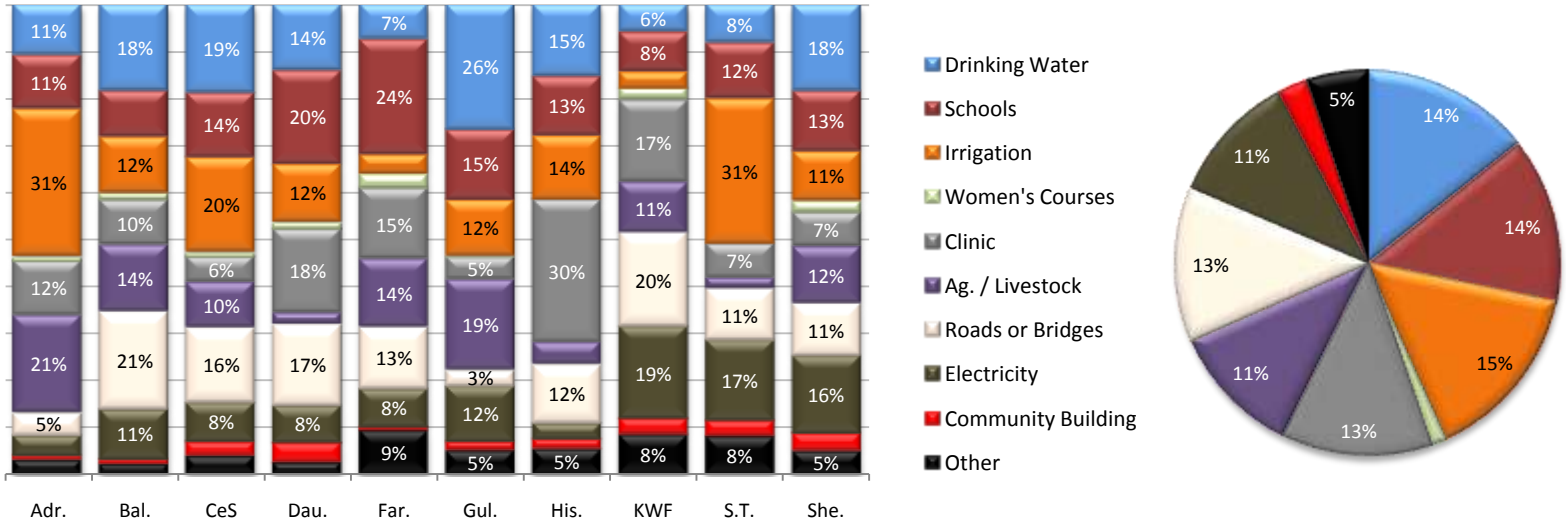
A district-level breakdown of the information on the preferences of the male focus group participants is presented in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Types of Projects Preferred by Male Focus Group Participants, by District

	Adr.	Bal.	CeS	Dau.	Far.	Gul.	His.	KWF	S.T.	She.	Total
Drinking Water	11%	18%	19%	14%	7%	26%	15%	6%	8%	18%	**14%**
Schools	31%	12%	20%	12%	4%	12%	14%	4%	31%	11%	**15%**
Roads or Bridges	5%	21%	16%	17%	13%	4%	12%	20%	11%	11%	**13%**
Irrigation	11%	10%	14%	20%	24%	15%	13%	9%	12%	13%	**14%**
Clinic / Health Facilities	12%	10%	6%	18%	15%	5%	30%	17%	7%	7%	**13%**
Electricity	5%	11%	8%	8%	8%	12%	4%	20%	17%	17%	**11%**
Agricultural Equipment	11%	6%	5%	1%	7%	8%	1%	2%	1%	3%	**4%**
Livestock	9%	4%	3%	1%	2%	8%	1%	4%	1%	4%	**4%**
Men's Courses	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	2%	1%	**2%**
Women's Courses	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	0%	0%	3%	0%	3%	**1%**
Seeds	2%	4%	2%	1%	6%	4%	3%	5%	1%	5%	**3%**
Microfinance Programs	1%	1%	2%	1%	7%	1%	4%	2%	1%	1%	**2%**
Health / Hygiene Courses	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	4%	5%	2%	**2%**
Toilet Facilities	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	**0%**
Community Center	1%	1%	2%	4%	1%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	**2%**

As displayed in Figure 19 below, the project preferences of male focus group respondents also display significant variation between districts. However, the cross-district variation in the project preferences of male focus group respondents is different from cross-district variation in the support by male heads of household. For example, drinking water projects were most popular among male focus groups participants in Gulran (26 percent), whereas in Hisarak they were supported by only 15 percent of the respondents. Irrigation projects were supported only by 11 percent of male focus groups participants in Adraskan, but by 24 percent in Farsi.

Figure 19: Types of Projects Preferred by Male Focus Group Respondents, by District



Female Respondents

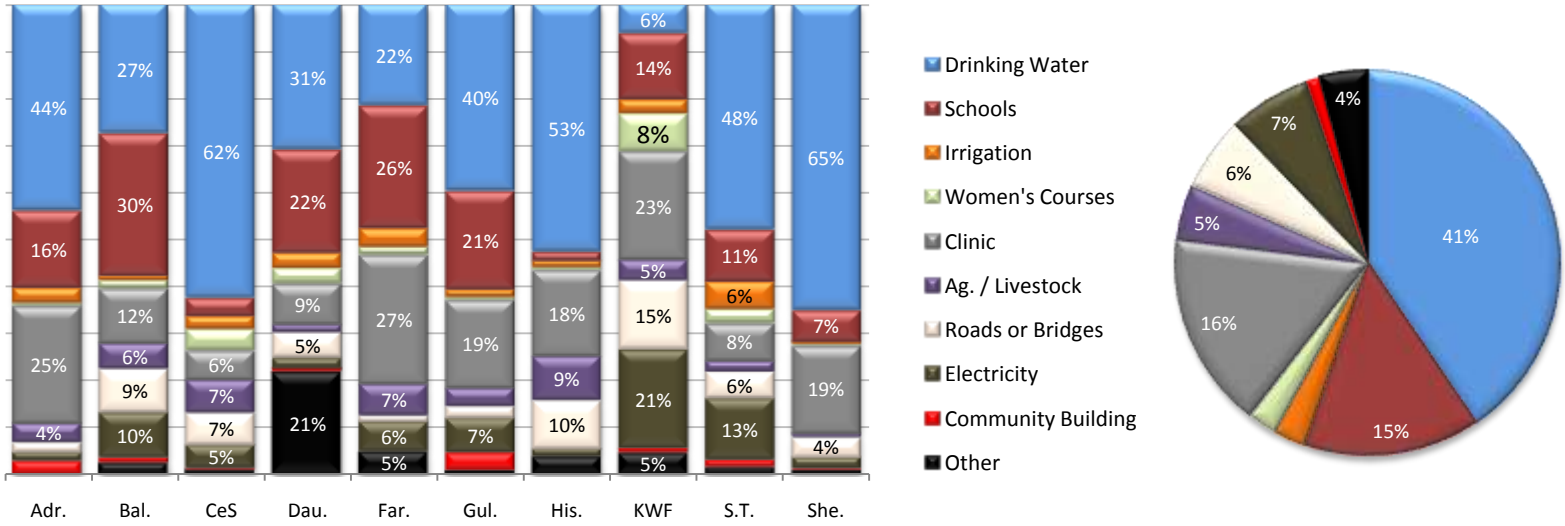
Information on the preferences of female respondents is presented in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Types of Projects Preferred by Female Respondents, by District

	Adr.	Bal.	CeS	Dau.	Far.	Gul.	His.	KWF	S.T.	She.	Total
Drinking Water	44%	28%	62%	31%	22%	40%	53%	6%	48%	65%	**41%**
Schools	3%	1%	3%	3%	4%	2%	1%	3%	6%	1%	**3%**
Roads or Bridges	2%	9%	7%	5%	1%	3%	10%	15%	6%	4%	**6%**
Irrigation	16%	30%	4%	22%	26%	21%	2%	14%	11%	7%	**15%**
Clinic / Health Facilities	25%	12%	6%	9%	27%	19%	18%	23%	8%	19%	**17%**
Electricity	2%	10%	5%	2%	6%	7%	2%	21%	13%	2%	**7%**
Agricultural Equipment	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	**1%**
Livestock	0%	2%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	**1%**
Men's Courses	0%	0%	0%	13%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	**2%**
Women's Courses	1%	2%	5%	3%	2%	1%	1%	8%	3%	0%	**2%**
Seeds	4%	3%	6%	1%	3%	2%	8%	2%	2%	1%	**3%**
Microfinance Programs	0%	2%	1%	3%	2%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	**1%**
Health / Hygiene Courses	0%	0%	0%	5%	3%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	**1%**
Toilet Facilities	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**0%**

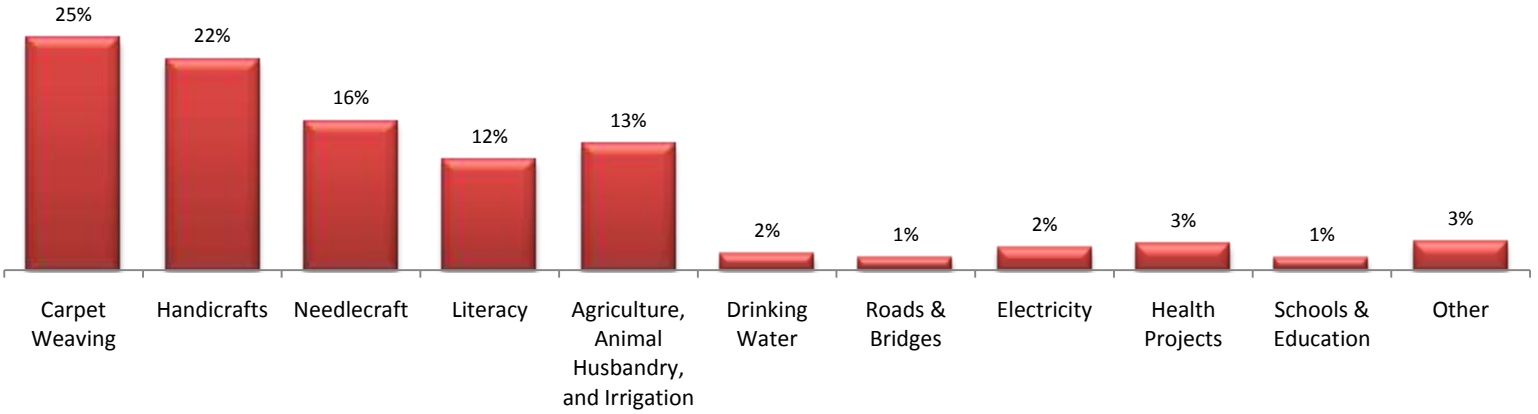
As shown in Figure 20 below and, as in the previous cases, there is significant variation in the support of different projects across districts. For some projects, cross-district variation in the support of different types of projects by female respondents is closer to cross-district variation in the support by male heads of household (e.g. for drinking water projects), but for others it is closer to cross-district variation in the support by male focus group participants (e.g. for irrigation projects).

Figure 20: Types of Projects Preferred by Female Respondents, by District



To collect information on women-specific projects, female respondents were asked an open-ended question about which type of project they felt would be most beneficial to women. Figure 21 below presents a summary of how women across the sample responded to the question. Training courses or income generating activities targeted at carpet weaving were the most frequently cited project, accounting for 25 percent of respondents. This was followed by training courses and income generating activities focused on handicrafts, which accounted for 22 percent of responses, then training courses and income generating activities for needlecrafts, which were cited by 16 percent of respondents, followed by projects focused on agriculture, animal husbandry, or irrigation (13 percent), and literacy courses (12 percent). The development projects focused on infrastructure, such as drinking water projects, electricity projects, education projects, and health projects, were cited by relatively few respondents.

Figure 21: Project Believed by Female Respondents to Be of Greatest Benefit to Women



Proposed Projects

A district-level breakdown of the types of projects proposed is given in Table 14. Owing perhaps to the requirement of NSP that at least one selected project be prioritized by women, women's courses were proposed most frequently, account for 24 percent of projects across the sample. Among other projects, the most frequently proposed were roads and bridges (21 percent), irrigation (15 percent), drinking water (15 percent), and electricity (13 percent). Schools and health facilities, despite the fact they were preferred by relatively large numbers of respondents

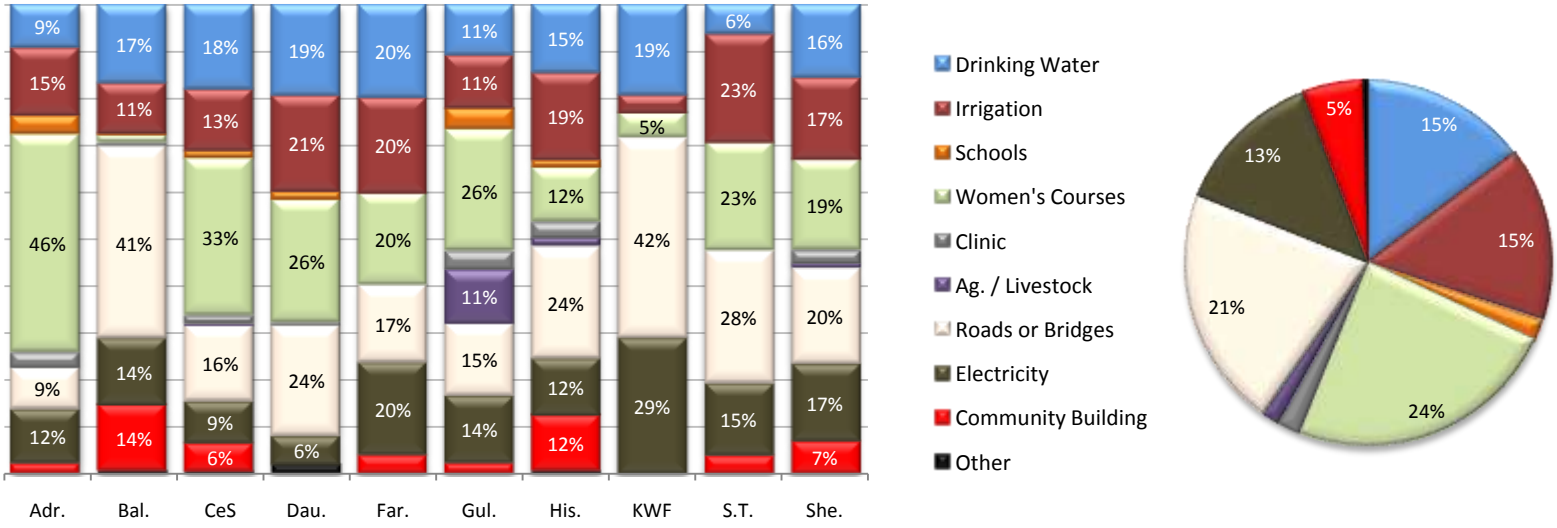
across the ten sample districts, were very rarely proposed, which is likely due to their high cost and also the government-imposed requirement that such project types to be coordinated through the responsible line ministries in order to avoid duplication of facilities.

Table 14: Types of Proposed Projects, by District

	Adr.	Bal.	CeS	Dau.	Far.	Gul.	His.	KWF	S.T.	She.	Total
Drinking Water	9%	17%	18%	19%	20%	11%	15%	19%	6%	16%	15%
Irrigation	15%	11%	13%	21%	21%	11%	19%	4%	23%	18%	15%
Schools	4%	1%	2%	2%	0%	5%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Women's Courses	46%	2%	33%	26%	20%	26%	12%	6%	23%	19%	24%
Men's Courses	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Clinic / Health Facilities	3%	1%	2%	1%	0%	4%	4%	0%	0%	3%	2%
Seeds	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Agricultural Equipment	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Livestock	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Roads or Bridges	9%	41%	16%	24%	17%	15%	24%	43%	28%	20%	21%
Electricity	12%	14%	9%	6%	20%	14%	12%	29%	15%	17%	13%
Microfinance Programs	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Communal Toilet Facilities	2%	0%	6%	0%	0%	1%	5%	0%	3%	0%	2%
Community Center	1%	14%	0%	0%	4%	2%	7%	0%	1%	7%	4%
Mosque	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	**269**	**174**	**234**	**161**	**127**	**175**	**172**	**73**	**78**	**103**	**1,566**

As demonstrated in Figure 22, the types of the proposed projects vary significantly between districts.[61] For example, roads and bridges constituted more than 42 percent of the proposed projects in Khost Wa Firing and 41 percent in Balkh, but only less than 9 percent in Adraskan. In another example, more than 23 percent of projects in Sang Takht were irrigation projects, whereas in Khost Wa Firing they constituted only 4 percent of the proposed projects.

Figure 22: Types of Proposed Projects



A comparison of the types of projects proposed in cluster, at-large, meeting, and referendum villages is presented in Table 15 below. No statistically significant differences are observed between the types of projects proposed in cluster and at-large villages or between the types of projects proposed in meeting and referendum villages.

[61] Chi-squared test rejects the hypotheses of the equality of distributions at the 1 percent level.

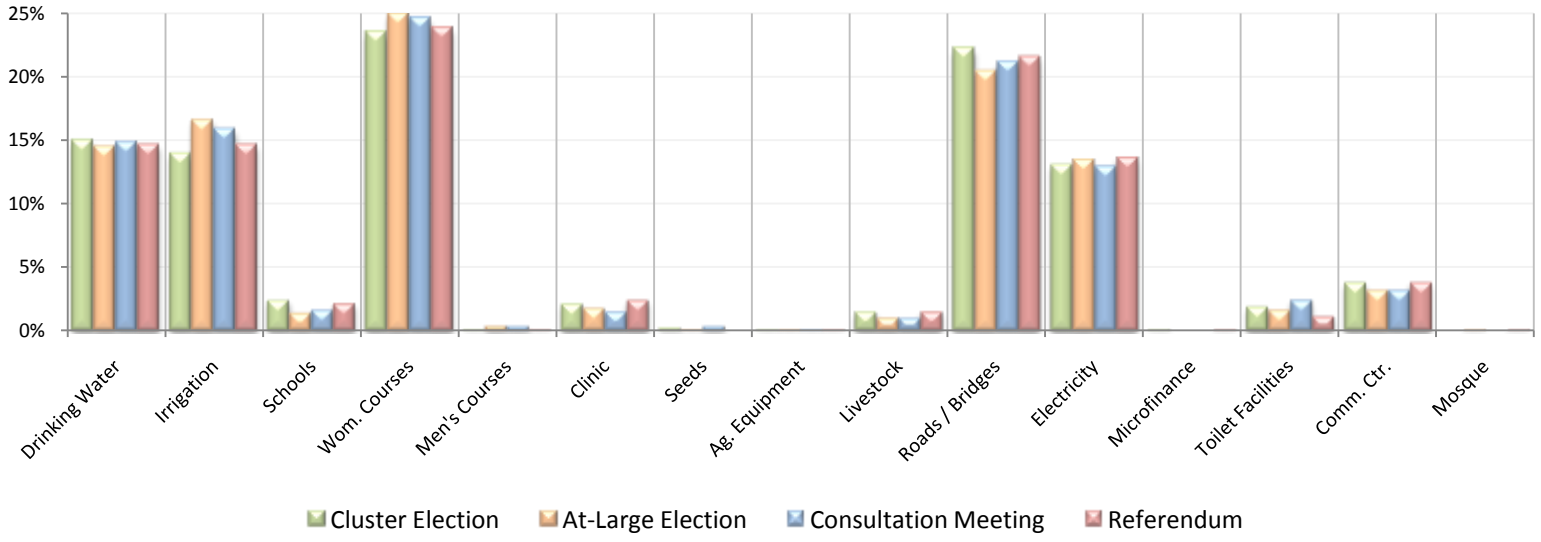
Table 15: Type of Proposed Projects, by Election and Selection Type

	Election Type		Project Selection Type	
	Cluster	At-Large	Meeting	Referendum
Drinking Water	15.0%	14.5%	14.8%	14.7%
Irrigation	13.9%	16.6%	15.9%	14.7%
Schools	2.4%	1.4%	1.7%	2.2%
Women's Courses	23.5%	25.0%	24.6%	23.9%
Men's Courses	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.1%
Clinic / Health Facilities	2.2%	1.8%	1.5%	2.4%
Seeds	0.3%	0.1%	0.4%	0.0%
Agricultural Equipment	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Livestock	1.5%	1.0%	1.0%	1.5%
Roads or Bridges	22.2%	20.5%	21.1%	21.6%
Electricity	13.1%	13.5%	12.9%	13.7%
Microfinance Programs	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Toilet Facilities	1.9%	1.7%	2.4%	1.2%
Community Center	3.8%	3.2%	3.2%	3.8%
Mosque	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Total	**789**	**777**	**782**	**784**

Note: Chi-squared test does not reject the hypothesis of the equality of distributions.

A graphical representation of the differences in the types of proposed projects between the four groups of villages assigned at-large or cluster elections, or consultation meeting or referenda, is presented in Figure 23 below.

Figure 23: Type of Proposed Projects, by Election Type and Project Selection Type



A comparison of the types of projects proposed in villages with different combinations of election and selection types is presented in Table 16. No significant differences are observed between the different combinations.

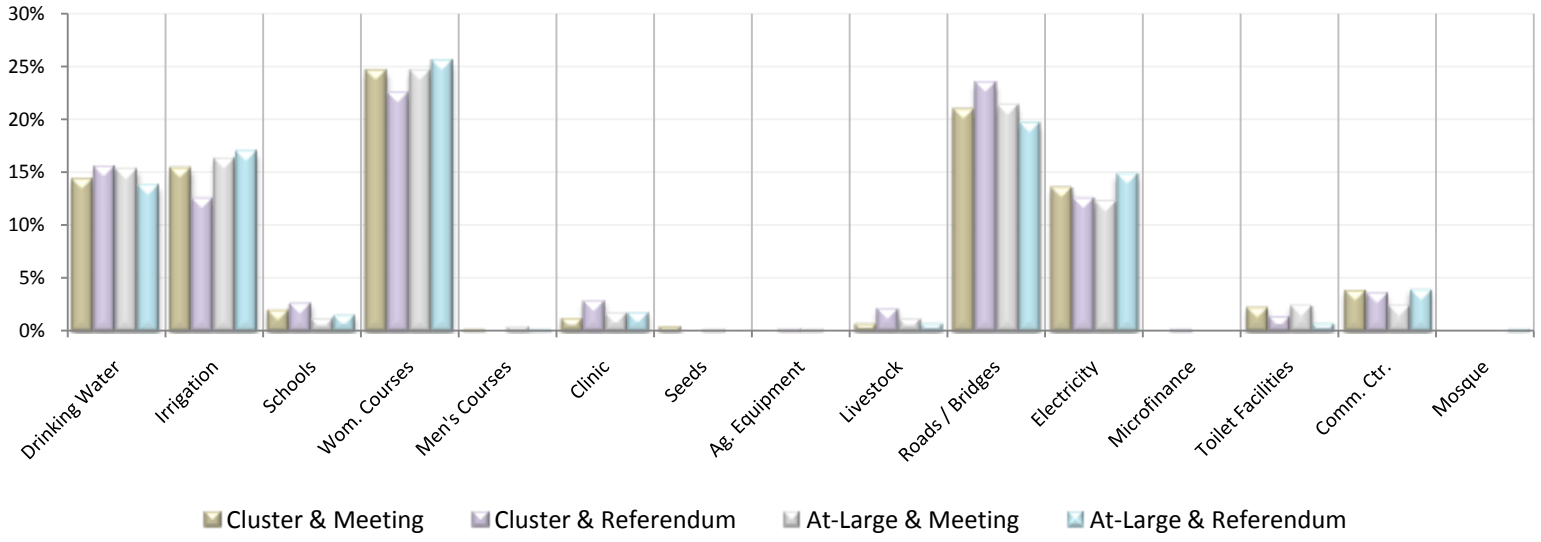
Table 16: Type of Proposed Projects, by Combination of Election and Selection Type

	Cluster & Meeting	Cluster & Referendum	At-Large & Meeting	At-Large & Referendum
Drinking Water	14.4%	15.5%	15.3%	13.8%
Irrigation	15.4%	12.6%	16.3%	16.9%
Schools	2.1%	2.7%	1.3%	1.6%
Women's Courses	24.5%	22.4%	24.6%	25.4%
Men's Courses	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%
Clinic / Health Facilities	1.3%	3.0%	1.8%	1.9%
Seeds	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
Agricultural Equipment	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%
Livestock	0.8%	2.2%	1.3%	0.8%
Roads or Bridges	20.9%	23.4%	21.3%	19.6%
Electricity	13.6%	12.6%	12.3%	14.8%
Microfinance Programs	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Toilet Facilities	2.4%	1.5%	2.5%	0.8%
Community Center	3.9%	3.7%	2.5%	4.0%
Mosque	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Total	**196**	**211**	**201**	**211**

Note: Chi-squared test does not reject the hypothesis of the equality of distributions.

A graphical representation of the differences in the types of proposed projects between the four groups of villages assigned at-large or cluster elections, or consultation meeting or referenda, is presented Figure 24 below.

Figure 24: Type of Proposed Projects, by Election Type and Project Selection Type



Selected Projects

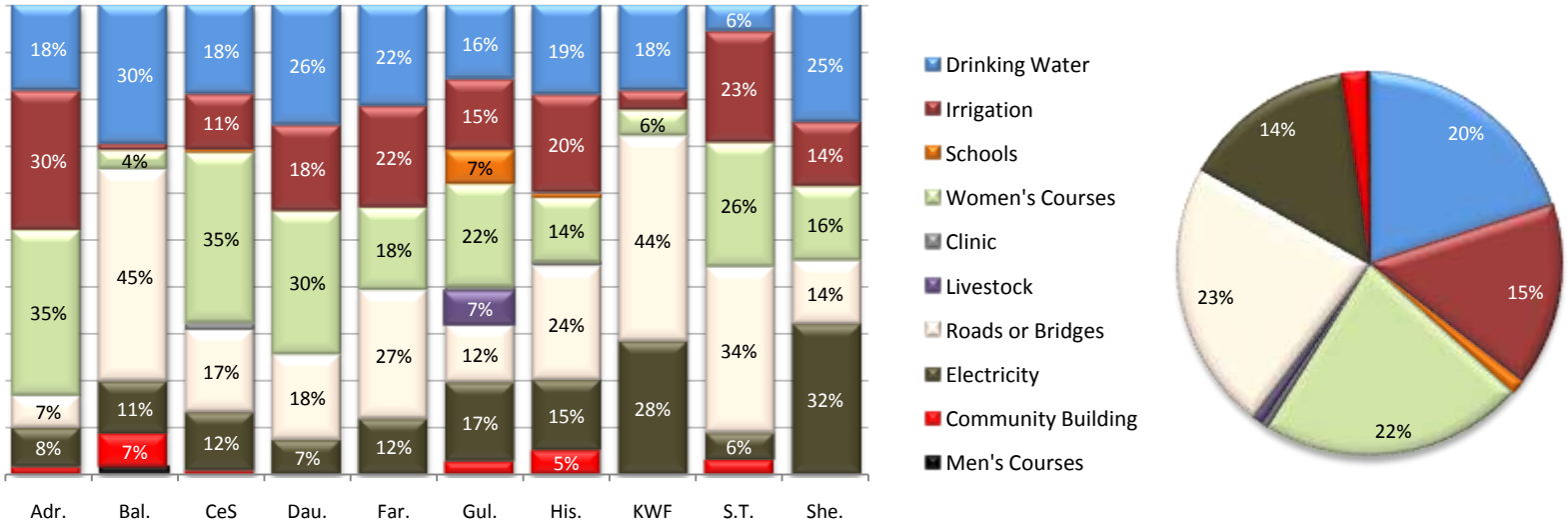
A district-level breakdown on the types of projects selected is presented in Table 17. Roads and bridges were the most frequently selected type of project (23 percent), followed by women's training courses (22 percent), drinking water (20 percent), irrigation (15 percent), and electricity (14 percent).

Table 17: Types of Selected Projects, by District

	Adr.	Bal.	CeS	Dau.	Far.	Gul.	His.	KWF	S.T.	She.	Total
Drinking Water	18.3%	29.6%	18.2%	25.6%	21.6%	15.9%	18.9%	18.3%	5.7%	25.0%	19.8%
Irrigation	29.6%	1.4%	11.3%	18.3%	21.6%	15.0%	20.5%	4.2%	22.9%	13.6%	15.3%
Schools	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
Women's Courses	35.2%	4.2%	34.6%	30.5%	17.7%	22.1%	13.9%	5.6%	25.7%	15.9%	21.9%
Men's Courses	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Clinic	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Livestock	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Roads or Bridges	7.0%	45.1%	17.0%	18.3%	27.5%	12.4%	23.8%	43.7%	34.3%	13.6%	22.6%
Electricity	8.5%	11.3%	12.0%	7.3%	11.8%	16.8%	14.8%	28.2%	5.7%	31.8%	14.4%
Community Center	1.4%	7.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	4.9%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	2.1%
Toilet Facilities	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	1.2%
Total	**71**	**71**	**159**	**82**	**51**	**113**	**122**	**71**	**35**	**44**	**819**

As in the case of the proposed projects, the types of the selected projects across districts exhibit noticeable variation across districts,[62] as is demonstrated in Figure 25 below. For example, roads and bridges constituted 45 percent of selected projects in Balkh and 44 percent in Khost Wa Firing, but only 7 percent in Adraskan. In addition, almost 30 percent of selected projects in Balkh were drinking water projects, but in Sang Takht they constituted less than 6 percent. The share of irrigation projects varied from 23 percent in Sang Takht to less than 1 percent in Balkh, while women's courses ranged from 35 percent in Adraskan and Chisht-e Sharif to 4 percent in Balkh and 6 percent in Khost Wa Firing.

Figure 25: Types of Selected Projects



As is demonstrated in Table 18 and as was the case with the comparison of proposed projects, no significant differences are observed between the two election types or the two selection types in the mix of selected projects across the sample.

[62] Chi-squared test rejects the hypotheses of the equality of distributions at the 1 percent level.

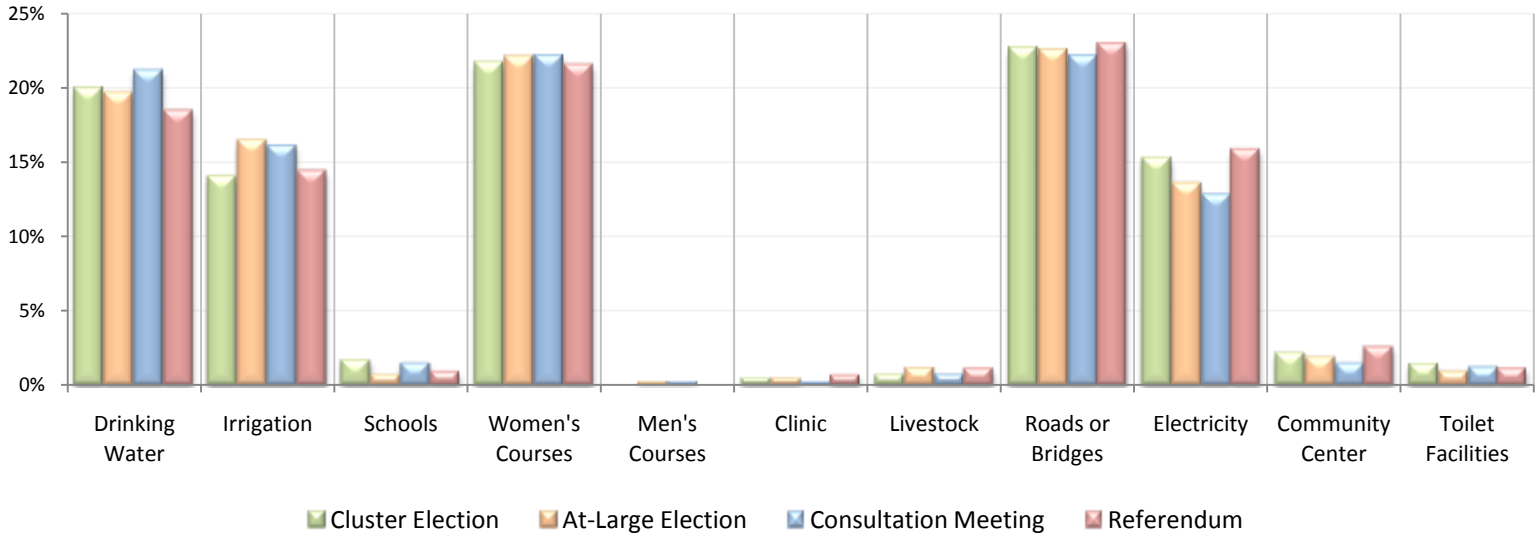
Table 18: Type of Selected Projects, by Election Type and Project Selection Type

	Election Type		Project Selection Type	
	Cluster	At-Large	Meeting	Referendum
Drinking Water	19.9%	19.7%	21.2%	18.5%
Irrigation	14.0%	16.5%	16.1%	14.5%
Schools	1.7%	0.7%	1.5%	1.0%
Women's Courses	21.6%	22.1%	22.2%	21.6%
Men's Courses	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%
Clinic / Health Facilities	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%	0.7%
Livestock	0.7%	1.2%	0.8%	1.2%
Roads or Bridges	22.6%	22.6%	22.2%	23.0%
Electricity	15.2%	13.6%	12.9%	15.9%
Communal Toilet Facilities	2.2%	1.9%	1.5%	2.6%
Community Center	1.5%	1.0%	1.3%	1.2%
Total	**407**	**412**	**379**	**422**

Note: Chi-squared test does not reject the hypothesis of the equality of distributions.

A graphical representation of the differences in the types of selected projects between the four groups of villages assigned at-large or cluster elections, or consultation meeting or referenda, is presented in Figure 26 below.

Figure 26: Type of Selected Projects, by Election Type and Project Selection Type



A comparison of the types of projects selected in villages with different combinations of election and selection types is presented in Table 19. No significant differences are observed between the different combinations.

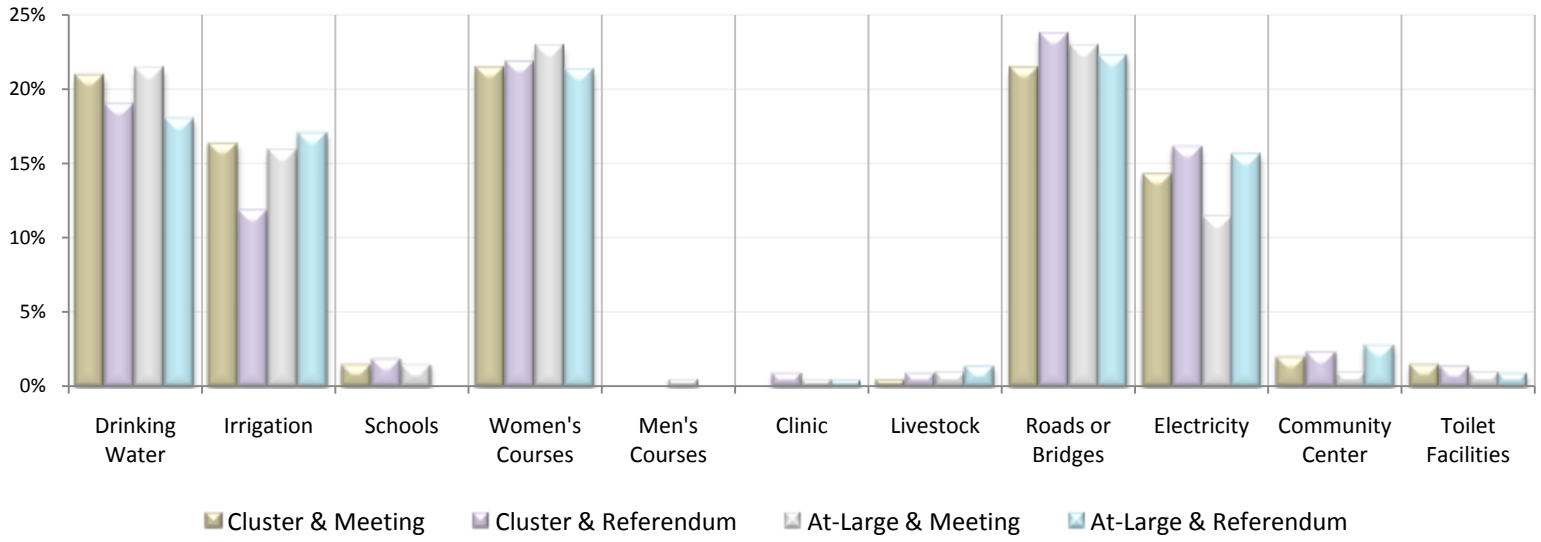
Table 19: Type of Selected Projects, by Combination of Election Type and Project Selection Type

	Cluster & Meeting	Cluster & Referendum	At-Large & Meeting	At-Large & Referendum
Drinking Water	20.9%	19.0%	21.4%	18.0%
Irrigation	16.3%	11.9%	15.9%	17.1%
Schools	1.5%	1.9%	1.5%	0.0%
Women's Courses	21.4%	21.8%	22.9%	21.3%
Men's Courses	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
Clinic / Health Facilities	0.0%	1.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Livestock	0.5%	1.0%	1.0%	1.4%
Roads or Bridges	21.4%	23.7%	22.9%	22.3%
Electricity	14.3%	16.1%	11.4%	15.6%
Communal Toilet Facilities	2.0%	2.4%	1.0%	2.8%
Community Center	1.5%	1.4%	1.0%	1.0%
Total	**196**	**211**	**201**	**211**

Note: Chi-squared test does not reject the hypothesis of the equality of distributions.

A graphical representation of the differences in the types of selected projects between the four groups of villages assigned at-large or cluster elections, or consultation meeting or referenda, is presented Figure 27 below.

Figure 27: Type of Selected Projects, by Election Type and Project Selection Type



Prioritized Projects

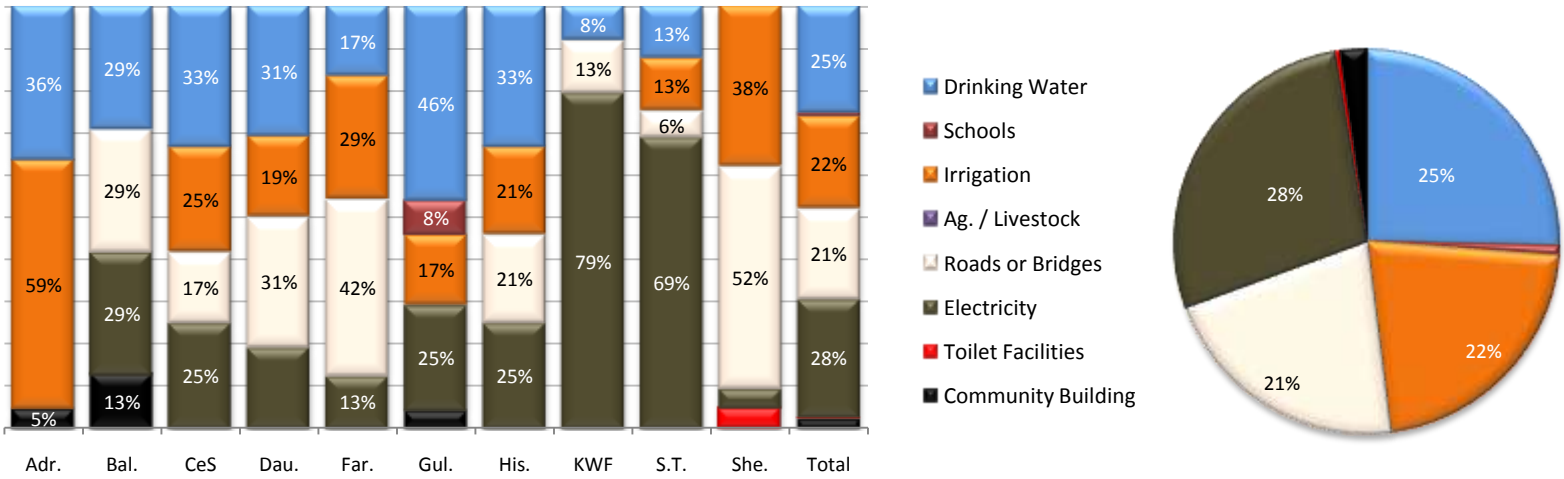
Information on the types of prioritized projects, which were selected projects other than women's projects that were chosen to be the implemented first, is presented in Table 20 below. The most frequently form of prioritized project was electricity (28 percent), followed by drinking water (25 percent), irrigation (22 percent), and roads and bridges (22 percent).

Table 20: Types of Prioritized Projects, by District

	Adr.	Bal.	CeS	Dau.	Far.	Gul.	His.	KWF	S.T.	She.	Total
Drinking Water	36.4%	29.2%	33.3%	30.8%	16.7%	45.8%	33.3%	8.3%	12.5%	0.0%	25.3%
Irrigation	59.1%	0.0%	25.0%	19.2%	29.2%	16.7%	20.8%	0.0%	12.5%	38.1%	21.8%
Schools	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Roads or Bridges	0.0%	29.2%	16.7%	30.8%	41.7%	0.0%	20.8%	12.5%	6.3%	52.4%	21.4%
Electricity	0.0%	29.2%	25.0%	19.2%	12.5%	25.0%	25.0%	79.2%	68.8%	4.8%	28.0%
Toilet Facilities	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	0.4%
Community Center	4.6%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
Total	**22**	**24**	**24**	**26**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**24**	**16**	**21**	**229**

As demonstrated in Figure 28 below, significant variation exists between districts in the types of prioritized projects. [63] Electricity projects constituted 69 percent of the selected projects in Sang Takht and none in Adraskan. For example, more than 45 percent of prioritized projects in Gulran pertained to drinking water, while in Sherzad, none did. A further example is that almost 60 percent of prioritized projects in Adraskan were related to irrigation, but in Khost Wa Firing there were none.

Figure 28: Types of Prioritized Projects, by District



Information on the types of projects prioritized by villages assigned different election or selection types is presented in Table 20. No statistically significant differences are observed between villages assigned to different election types, but differences are observed between villages assigned to different selections types. [64] Referendum villages are, for instance, more likely to prioritize electricity projects, whereas meeting villages were more likely to prioritize drinking water or irrigation projects.

[63] Chi-squared test rejects the hypotheses of the equality of distributions at the 1 percent level.
[64] Chi-squared test rejects the hypotheses of the equality of distributions at the 10 percent level.

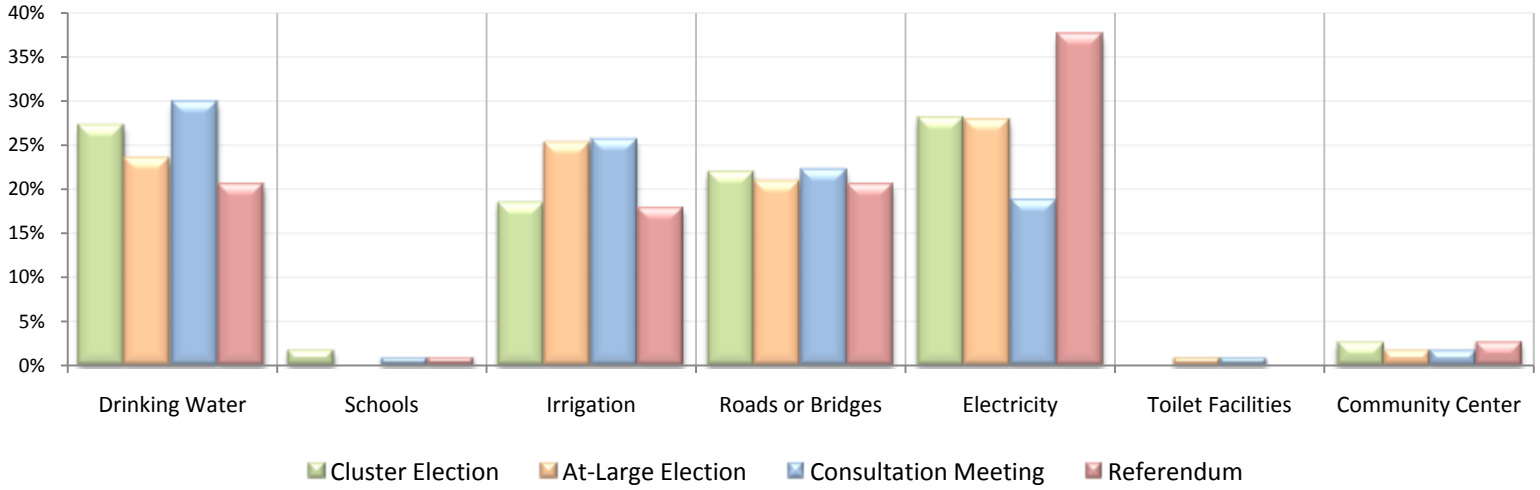
Table 21: Type of Prioritized Projects, by Election Type and Project Selection Type

	Election Type		Project Selection Type	
	Cluster	At-Large	Meeting	Referendum
Drinking Water	27.2%	23.5%	*29.9%*	*20.5%*
Schools	1.8%	0.0%	*0.9%*	*0.9%*
Irrigation	18.4%	25.2%	*25.6%*	*17.9%*
Roads or Bridges	21.9%	20.9%	*22.2%*	*20.5%*
Electricity	28.1%	27.8%	*18.8%*	*37.5%*
Toilet Facilities	0.0%	0.9%	*0.9%*	*0.0%*
Community Center	2.6%	1.7%	*1.7%*	*2.7%*
Total	**114**	**115**	**117**	**112**

Note: Differences between distributions for combination of election and selection type are significant at the 10 percent level if italicized; significant at the 5 percent level if underlined and italicized; and significant at the 1 percent level if bolded, underlined, and italicized. Differences for all other comparisons of distributions are statistically insignificant.

A graphical representation of the differences in the types of selected projects between the four groups of villages assigned at-large or cluster elections, or consultation meeting or referenda, is presented in Figure 29 below.

Figure 29: Type of Prioritized Projects, by Election Type and Project Selection Type



As shown in Table 22 below, a comparison of villages with different election – selection combinations indicates that the aforementioned differences between meeting and referendum villages is driven by meeting villages in which cluster elections were also held.[65] Among the other three sub-samples of villages, there are no significant differences in the types of prioritized projects.

[65] For this sub-sample chi-squared test rejects the hypotheses of the equality of distributions at 5 percent level.

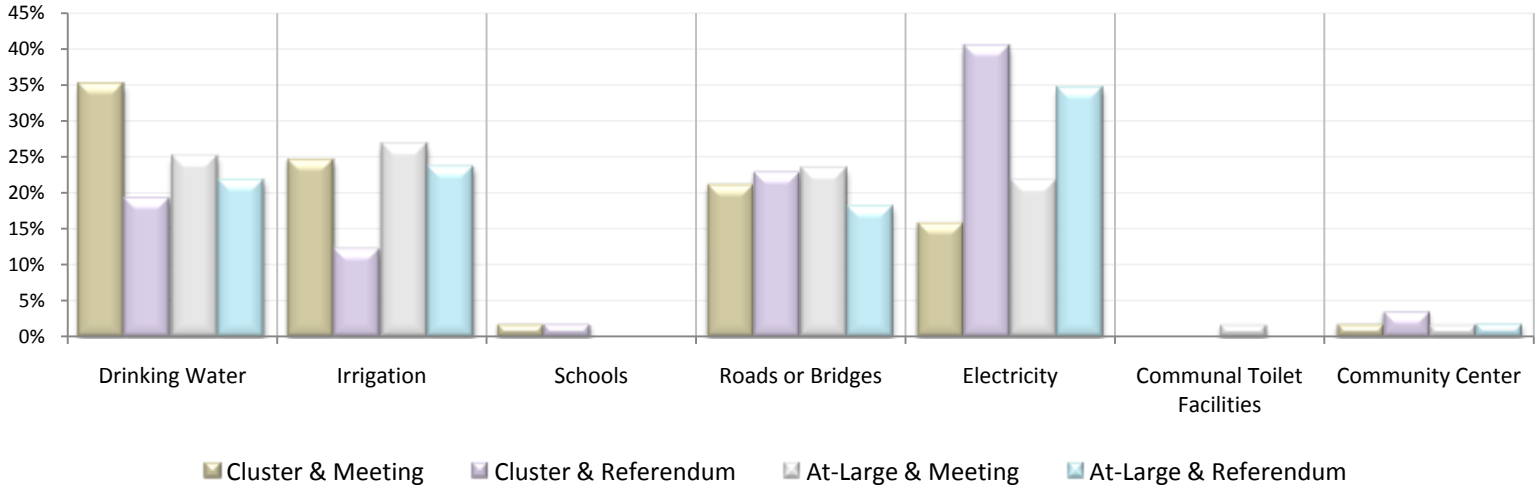
Table 22: Type of Prioritized Projects, by Combination of Election Type and Project Selection Type

	Cluster & Meeting	Cluster & Referendum	At-Large & Meeting	At-Large & Referendum
Drinking Water	35.1%	19.3%	25.0%	21.8%
Schools	24.6%	12.3%	26.7%	23.6%
Irrigation	1.8%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Roads or Bridges	21.1%	22.8%	23.3%	18.2%
Electricity	15.8%	40.4%	21.7%	34.6%
Toilet Facilities	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%
Community Center	1.8%	3.5%	1.7%	1.8%
Total	**57**	**57**	**60**	**55**

Note: Chi-squared test does not reject the hypothesis of the equality of distributions.

A graphical representation of the differences in the types of prioritized projects between the four groups of villages assigned at-large or cluster elections, or consultation meeting or referenda, is presented Figure 30 below.

Figure 30: Type of Prioritized Projects, by Election Type and Project Selection Type



VI.3. Alignment of Proposed, Selected and Prioritized Projects with Projects Preferred by Different Respondent Groups

This section examines the extent to which proposed, selected, and prioritized projects align with preferences of villagers. To this end, information collected on the preferences of different groups of villagers – male heads-of-household, male elites, and female villagers – is utilized in order to determine the revealed influence each group has over the selection of projects. The analysis is thus able to discern the impact of the two different types of elections and selection procedures over the relative influence of groups in the selection of projects.[66]

The analysis proceeds by identifying, for each village, the type of project that was identified by a plurality of respondents as most important for the village. For each village and each type of project, four dummy variables are constructed, $Plurality_{ij}^{r}$, which indicate whether, in village, i, project of type, j, was cited as the most important project by a plurality of respondent group, r.[67]

[66] The analysis in this subsection is inspired by that presented in (Labonne & Chase, 2009)

[67] Since the same women were members of the female focus group participants and individual female respondents, we analyze separately their preferences revealed during focus group and in individual interviews.

In addition, a further four dummy variables are constructed, $Proposed_{ij}$, $Selected_{ij}$, $Prioritized\ (1)_{ij}$, and $Prioritized\ (1-3)_{ij}$ that indicated whether in village, i, project of type, j, was proposed as a candidate project, whether it was selected, whether it was selected as the first project, and whether it was among the first three projects selected. To increase statistical power, the fourteen types of projects (excluding women's courses)[68] are assigned to one of five groups: (1) roads and bridges, (2) irrigation, (3) drinking water, (4) electricity, and (5) other. To estimate the effect of groups' preferences on the selection of different types of projects and the impact of the selection or election method on this, conditional fixed-effects logit regression is estimated using the corresponding interaction terms.

The results in the first sub-section below indicate that preferences of male village leaders have a significant impact on the probability of the proposal of a particular project type in at-large villages but not cluster villages, while preferences of male household respondents have a highly significant impact on project selection and prioritization under both election systems. Election type only appears to have a significant impact in increasing the role of the preferences of female villages in the prioritization of the first projects implemented, which is greater under cluster elections.

The results reported in the second sub-section below indicate that, in both meeting and referendum villages, preferences of male head-of-household respondents are an integral determinant of which projects are selected and prioritized. The preferences of the male village leaders are found to be important in determining the type of projects proposed, selected, prioritized first, and prioritized first, second, and third, but only in consultation meetings. Preferences of female respondents, as expressed during the focus group, are found to be relevant at the stage of project prioritization in referenda, while the preferences of female respondents, as expressed during the individual interview, are found to be a significant determinant of project selection and prioritization, but only in meeting villages. Significant differences are observed between the two selection types, with the preferences of male village leaders exerting greater influence over the type of projects proposed, selected, prioritized first, and prioritized first, second, or third under consultation meetings as compared to outcomes under referenda.

Effect of Election Type

In this section, we are seeking to identify any statistically significant differences between cluster and at-large villages in the influence of preferences of the different groups of villagers over proposed, selected, and prioritized projects and to examine the relative roles of the different groups in project selection. The results of the estimation are reported in Table 23.

With respect to the probability of a given project being proposed, the preferences of male focus group respondents are found to be a significant determinant, but only in at-large villages. The preferences of all other respondent groups are found to be statistically irrelevant to which projects are proposed. In both cluster and at-large villages, preferences expressed by male head-of-household respondents in the baseline survey are found to have a highly significant impact on the type of projects that are selected, prioritized as the first project, or prioritized as the first, second, or third project. The effect of the preferences of other respondent groups are not significant in any specifications, except for the effect of the preferences of female focus group respondents in cluster villages, whose effect on the choice of the three prioritized projects is marginally significant.

[68] We exclude from the analysis projects of type "training or literacy courses for women", since they were selected mainly as women's projects and were thus subjected to very different selection criteria from other projects.

Across the specifications, the only significant difference observed between cluster and at-large villages is with respect to the influence of female focus group participants in prioritizing projects, which is found to be marginally more significant in cluster villages.

Table 23: Effect of *Ex-Ante* Project Preferences on Probability of Project Proposal, Selection and Prioritization, by Election Type

Election Type	Instrument	Proposal		Selection		Prioritization (1st)		Prioritization (1st – 3rd)	
Cluster	Male Household	0.10	0.11	**1.00**	**1.00**	**0.56**	**0.58**	**0.83**	**0.84**
		[0.35]	[0.42]	**[3.98]*** **	**[3.89]*** **	**[2.16]** **	**[2.18]** **	**[3.41]*** **	**[3.37]*** **
At-Large	Male Household	-0.13	-0.20	**0.51**	**0.48**	**0.60**	**0.68**	**0.64**	**0.64**
		[0.51]	[0.80]	**[2.05]** **	**[2.02]** **	**[2.39]** **	**[2.82]*** **	**[2.72]*** **	**[2.91]*** **
***t*-Stat of Diff. btw. Types**		[0.63]	[0.61]	[1.32]	[1.39]	[0.14]	[0.12]	[0.80]	[0.67]
Cluster	Male Focus Group	0.24	0.25	0.08	0.08	0.15	0.17	0.24	0.24
		[0.76]	[0.77]	[0.38]	[0.36]	[0.60]	[0.70]	[1.05]	[1.04]
At-Large	Male Focus Group	**0.93**	**0.85**	0.42	0.40	0.39	0.41	0.38	0.37
		[2.94]* **	**[2.78]*** **	[1.61]	[1.53]	[1.48]	[1.57]	[1.52]	[1.51]
***t*-Stat of Diff. btw. Types**		[0.61]	[0.85]	[1.39]	[1.53]	[0.12]	[0.28]	[0.67]	[0.61]
Cluster	Female Focus Group	0.10	-	0.18	-	0.34	-	**0.39**	-
		[0.36]	-	[0.80]	-	[1.38]	-	**[1.81]***	-
At-Large	Female Focus Group	-0.30	-	-0.11	-	0.19	-	-0.08	-
		[1.03]	-	[0.46]	-	[0.70]	-	[0.35]	-
***t*-Stat of Diff. btw. Types**		[1.04]		[0.93]		[0.41]		**[2.03]** **	
Cluster	Female Individual	-	0.12	-	0.34	-	0.09	-	0.36
		-	[0.45]	-	[1.44]	-	[0.33]	-	[1.55]
At-Large	Female Individual	-	0.08	-	0.26	-	0.04	-	0.04
		-	[0.29]	-	[1.08]	-	[0.15]	-	[0.17]
***t*-Stat of Diff. btw. Types**			[0.12]		[0.23]		[0.15]		[1.00]
Project-Type Fixed Effects		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of Observations		875	875	1,120	1,120	1,130	1,130	1,140	1,140

Estimation uses conditional logit with village fixed-effects, with a categorical dependent variable representing five categories of projects (training or literacy courses for women are excluded from the analysis) and standard errors clustered at the village level. Significant coefficients and *t*-stats are bolded, with * denoting significance at 10% level, ** significance at 5%, and *** significant at 1%.

Effect of Selection Type

In this section, we are seeking to identify any statistically significant differences between meeting and referendum villages in the influence of preferences of the different groups of villagers over proposed, selected, and prioritized projects and to examine the relative roles of the different groups in project selection. The results of the estimation are reported in Table 24.

With respect to the probability of a given project being proposed, the preferences of male focus group respondents are found to be a highly significant determinant in meeting villages, but have no bearing in referendum villages. The preferences of all other respondent groups are found to be statistically irrelevant to which projects are proposed.

In both meeting and referendum villages, project selection is found to be significantly impacted by the preferences of male head-of-household respondents. The preferences of male focus group respondents are a significant determinant of the probability of a project type being selected under consultation meetings, but not in referenda, while the preferences of female respondents – as expressed through the female individual interviews – are a significant determinant of the probability of project selection only in meeting villages, but not in referendum villages. The preferences of female respondents expressed during the focus group are not a statistically significant determinant in either meeting or referendum villages.

As with selected projects, the preferences of male heads-of-households are found to be significant determinants of which projects are prioritized first in both meeting and referendum villages. In addition, the probability of the prioritization of a project as the first one to be implemented is found to be affected, at relatively high levels of statistical significance, by the preferences of male focus group respondents in meeting villages, but is unaffected by such in referendum villages. The preferences of female focus group respondents are observed to have a significant impact on the type of project prioritized first in referendum villages, but not in meeting villages, while the preferences of female individual respondents are found to be irrelevant. The prioritization of the first, second, and third projects are found to be significantly influenced by the preferences of male household respondents in both meeting and referendum villages, by the preferences of male focus group respondents in meeting villages, and by female individual respondents in meeting villages.

Significant differences are observed between meeting and referendum villages in influence of the preferences of male focus group respondents, with consultation meetings resulting in much greater alignment between the projects preferred by the village leadership and those projects which are proposed, selected, prioritized first, or prioritized first, second, and third.[69] In addition, significant differences between meeting and referendum villages are observed with respect to the alignment between selected and prioritized projects and the preferences of female respondents. In project selection, the preferences of female focus group respondents are more significant in referenda, while at the stage of prioritization, the preferences of female individual respondents are accorded greater influence in the consultation meeting.

[69] This result is consistent with (Humphreys, Masters, & Sandbu, 2006), which finds that preferences of discussion leaders have a significant effect on the outcomes of deliberative meetings. Since discussion leaders in consultation meetings are likely to overlap with the village leadership interviewed during the male focus group, the preferences of this group are likely to have important influence on the outcomes of the consultation meetings.

Table 24: Effect of *Ex-Ante* Project Preferences on Probability of Project Proposal, Selection and Prioritization, by Selection Method

Election Type	Instrument	Proposal		Selection		Prioritization (1st)		Prioritization (1st – 3rd)	
Consultation Meeting	Male Household	-0.21	-0.33	**0.76**	**0.66**	**0.61**	**0.55**	**0.76**	**0.66**
		[0.72]	[1.19]	**[3.20]*** **	**[2.79]*** **	**[2.42]****	**[2.20]****	**[3.20]*** **	**[2.79]*** **
Referendum	Male Household	0.19	0.26	**0.75**	**0.85**	**0.52**	**0.72**	**0.75**	**0.85**
		[0.77]	[1.10]	**[2.89]*** **	**[3.30]*** **	**[2.06]****	**[2.82]*** **	**[2.89]*** **	**[3.30]*** **
***t*-Stat of Difference btw. Types**		[1.05]	[1.61]	[0.01]	[0.55]	[0.24]	[0.49]	[0.49]	[1.38]
Consultation Meeting	Male Focus Group	**1.00**	**0.91**	**0.55**	**0.53**	**0.65**	**0.66**	**0.69**	**0.70**
		[2.94]* **	**[2.73]*** **	**[2.22]****	**[2.13]****	**[2.48]****	**[2.56]****	**[2.77]*** **	**[2.82]*** **
Referendum	Male Focus Group	0.24	0.22	-0.07	-0.08	-0.18	-0.12	-0.07	-0.09
		[0.85]	[0.76]	[0.27]	[0.34]	[0.69]	[0.47]	[0.31]	[0.38]
***t*-Stat of Difference btw. Types**		**[1.74]***	[1.60]	**[1.80]***	**[1.78]***	**[2.28]****	**[2.17]****	**[2.30]****	**[2.29]****
Consultation Meeting	Female Focus Group	-0.45	-	-0.21	-	0.15	-	0.02	-
		[1.63]	-	[0.88]	-	[0.59]	-	[0.09]	-
Referendum	Female Focus Group	0.27	-	0.30	-	**0.43**	-	**0.46**	-
		[0.99]	-	[1.43]	-	**[1.65]***	-	**[2.07]****	-
***t*-Stat of Difference btw. Types**		**[1.92]***		**[1.68]***		[0.79]		[1.05]	
Consultation Meeting	Female Individual	-	0.05	**-**	**0.46**	-	0.41	**-**	**0.43**
		-	[0.19]	-	**[1.94]***	-	[1.43]	-	**[1.88]***
Referendum	Female Individual	-	0.14	-	0.14	-	-0.30	-	-0.06
		-	[0.53]	-	[0.60]	-	[1.01]	-	[0.24]
***t*-Stat of Difference btw. Types**			[0.22]		[0.96]		**[1.88]***		[1.34]
Project-Type Fixed Effects		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of Observations		875	880	1,120	1,130	1,130	1,140	1,140	1,150

Estimation uses conditional logit with village fixed-effects, with a categorical dependent variable representing five categories of projects (training or literacy courses for women are excluded from the analysis) and standard errors clustered at the village level. Significant coefficients and *t*-stats are bolded, with * denoting significance at 10% level, ** significance at 5%, and *** significant at 1%.

VII. Conclusion

This paper presented initial findings of an experiment to test the impact of two different procedures for project selection – consultation meeting and referendum – and two different election methods – cluster and at-large – on the characteristics of projects proposed, selected, and prioritized for implementation under a community-driven development program in Afghanistan. Each of the 250 sample villages was independently and randomly assigned one of the two selection methods and one of the two election procedures, thereby enabling a rigorous examination of the impact of each selection and election type and different combinations of both on project selection outcomes.

Among the differences found between the two election and selection types is that the magnitude by which project costs were adjusted between the time of proposal and implementation is about three times greater in villages assigned referenda, compared to those assigned consultation meetings. The study also observes a very strong association was observed in referenda between the order in which projects were listed on the ballot and their probability of selection, with a

project listed first experiencing a selection probability of almost 90 percent compared to a 60 percent probability for a project listed third, which could be indicative of a strong 'pure order' effect at work in voting patterns of Afghan villages and/or of manipulation of referenda by CDC members, FP representatives, or others involved in the design of ballot papers.

The study observes no general differences between election methods or project selection procedures in the types of projects that are proposed or selected, but does find a significant difference between the two selection procedures in the type of projects which are prioritized for implementation, with electricity projects more likely to be selected for implementation first under referenda as compared to consultation meetings. Analysis of the alignment of *ex-ante* preferences with project selection results indicates that the selection and prioritization of projects was primarily influenced by the preferences of ordinary male villagers, regardless of the type of election or selection procedure. There is also some evidence that preferences of village women also affect the type of project which is selected and prioritized. The influence of male village elites over the selection process is significantly influenced by the procedure used for project selection, with the preferences of such elites coinciding much more frequently with the types of selected and prioritized projects under consultation meetings, as compared to referenda.

Due to limitations on the availability of data at the time of writing, the analysis is necessarily limited to estimating the impact of election methods and project selection procedures on direct outcomes of the selection process and, for reasons of data availability, is not intended to provide a definitive answer on which election and project selection types are most conducive to improving the efficacy of the program in delivering improvements in general development outcomes. It is to this end that it is envisaged that later work, based on new data, will focus on the effects of selection and election methods on other outcomes related to the implementation of NSP and general socio-economic and institutional characteristics and will thereby be able to provide a specific recommendation as to which selection and election types are most conducive to successful implementation of NSP and other community-driven development (CDD) programs in analogous contexts.

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Annex I: STI-2 Guide for Social Organizers

SUB-PROJECT SELECTION IN EVALUATION VILLAGES
A GUIDE FOR SOCIAL ORGANIZERS WORKING IN EVALUATION DISTRICTS

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SUB-PROJECT SELECTION PROCEDURES IN EVALUATION DISTRICTS

A. Introduction

An important part of the NSP program is the selection of the sub-projects to be funded by block grants disbursed by the NSP program. This manual provides instructions on how sub-projects should be selected in the 25 villages in this district which are included in the evaluation of the NSP program (known as "NSP evaluation districts"). The purpose of the evaluation is to learn about how the NSP program affects the quality of life of villagers and to test some new policies which might improve the impact of the NSP program on the lives of villagers. One of these new policies is a change in the way in which sub-projects are selected for funding by the NSP program.

In the 25 villages in this district which are included in the evaluation of the NSP program, two different procedures for sub-project selection will be implemented. The purpose of making this change is to determine the type of sub-project selection procedure which is most appropriate.

The two types of sub-project selection procedures are:

- Secret-Ballot Referendum: In 12 (or 13) NSP evaluation villages, sub-projects financed by the NSP program are to be selected by Secret-Ballot Referendum. According to this procedure, villagers are to vote in a Secret-Ballot Referendum for the sub-project which they would most like to see financed by the NSP program. All members of the community are allowed to participate in the referendum and each person's vote is to be secret, as in the CDC elections. The sub-project(s) which receive the most votes in the referendum receives funding from the NSP program.
- Consultation Meeting: In the other 13 (or 12) NSP evaluation villages, sub-projects financed by the NSP program are to be selected in a Consultation Meeting. All members of the community are to be invited to the Consultation Meeting, although the meeting is to be organized and chaired by the CDC members. At the meeting, the village community is to decide on the sub-projects that should be funded by the NSP program. This meeting should proceed in a manner similar to that of a customary "jirga", with the aim of reaching consensus among the CDC and villagers as to which of the proposed sub-projects should be selected for NSP funding.

The team that is conducting the evaluation of the NSP program has decided which 12 (or 13) villages are to use a Secret-Ballot Referendum to select sub-projects for NSP financing and which 13 (or 12) villages will use a Consultation Meeting to select sub-projects for NSP funding. The names of the 25 villages and the type of sub-project selection procedure they will receive are listed in Section E below. On the day that the Secret Ballot Referendum or Consultation Meeting is scheduled to be held in each village, the Evaluation Team will send a monitor to the village to ensure that the correct type of sub-project selection procedure is administered and that the procedure is implemented properly.

B. Community Development Plan: General Requirements

Following the election of the Community Development Council (CDC), the main task of the CDC is to decide how the Block Grant provided by the NSP program is to be used for the benefit of the

community. The first step in this process is the development of a Community Development Plan. This Community Development Plan outlines the needs of the community and provides a list of proposed sub-projects which might be funded through the NSP Block Grant.

The NSP Operational Manual stipulates that the Community Development Plan is to be developed through a participatory and inclusive process. Social Organizers should encourage CDC members to hold meetings with members of the community to assess and analyze the problems facing the community and to discuss how the NSP block grant might be used to alleviate these problems. One requirement of this process is that Social Organizers and the CDC must facilitate meetings of women in the village so that they can speak freely and register their priorities. The purpose of developing the Community Development Plan is to both develop the capacity of the CDC to analyze and address problems facing the community and to allow villagers to participate in the process of developing solutions to community problems.

The final Community Development Plan developed by the CDC should propose a number of sub-projects that may be funded by the NSP program. It is then the duty of the community to select the sub-projects listed on the Community Development Plan that they would most like to see funded by the NSP program. As noted in the NSP Operational Manual, two types of sub-projects may be financed by the NSP program: (1) Public Infrastructure; and (2) Human Capital Development. Table 1 below provides examples of these two types of sub-projects that may be implemented using funding from the NSP program.

Table 1: Types of Sub-projects

Public Infrastructure	Human Capital Development[4]
▪ Water Supply and Sanitation (latrine, toilet, public bath, reservoir, hand pump, water supply network, well, water filtration); ▪ Irrigation (canal, reservoir, diversion weir, gabions, aqueducts, *karez*, dam, intake, stream cleaning, protection wall, siphon, pipes, drainage); ▪ Hospital, clinic; ▪ School building; ▪ Transport (tunnel, bridge, retaining wall, culvert, roads); ▪ Power (diesel generator[2], micro-hydropower[3], solar panel, power lines); ▪ Water tankers; and ▪ Environmental Management (erosion protection, reforestation, etc.).	Programmes that increase community members' skills and knowledge of topics to improve their standard of living. a. General Education: such as health and hygiene education, child development training, training for traditional birth attendants, literacy[5], and other topics not directly related to income generation. b. Productive Skills Training**:** skills needed to increase household income. Examples include kitchen gardens, animal husbandry, bee-keeping, food processing, and vocational education. Materials and equipment related to training are also eligible for NSP funding; however, costs are capped at 15% of the overall Block Grant or AFA 225,000.[6] Examples include: ▪ carpet looms and weaving materials; ▪ tailoring and embroidery machines; ▪ flour mills; ▪ wool spinning materials; ▪ stores/markets; ▪ bakeries; and ▪ livestock and bees. Communities can have separate training programmes for different target groups, but at least 50% of the trainees overall must be women.

Table 1 provides examples of the kinds of subprojects typically funded under NSP, but it is important to note that other sub-projects may be eligible provided the FP and community have adequate

expertise to support subproject implementation. Proposals for subprojects that are not listed in this section will be reviewed by NSP/MRRD on a case-by-case basis. NSP/MRRD does, however, maintain a "Negative List" of sub-projects that are not eligible for funding by the NSP block grant. Types of sub-projects on the "Negative List" are listed in the NSP Operational Manual. Social Organizers should familiarize themselves with this list and explain to the CDC and to the community that NSP is not able to fund those types of sub-projects that are listed on the "Negative List".

Social Organizers are responsible for ensuring that all sub-projects proposed by the CDC in the Community Development Plan meet the sub-project appraisal criteria listed in Disbursement Form 7c. These criteria are:

- Sub-project is proposed by a CDC that has been elected in accordance with the OM guidelines;
- Sub-project provides equitable access to benefits;
- At least one sub-project identified by women as a priority must be targeted for NSP funding;[70]
- Sub-project is technically and financially sound (uses the engineering specifications in the new Technical Manual, where appropriate);
- Sub-project is compatible with social, environmental, and mine risk safeguards;
- Community has committed to contributing an amount equal to at least 10 percent of the Block Grant towards costs of proposed subproject(s);[71]
- Sub-project has an Operations and Maintenance Plan; and
- CDC has confirmed its commitment to ensuring transparency in the use of Block Grant funds.

C. Community Development Plan: Requirements in 25 NSP Evaluation Communities

In the 25 NSP evaluation communities, the Community Development Plan should include **at least** 2 sub-projects plus the woman's sub-project (3 sub-projects total). A very important additional requirement is that the total cost (excluding community contributions) of the sub-projects proposed in the Community Development Plan (including the woman's sub-project) must exceed the expected value of the NSP block grant by an amount greater than the average value of the proposed sub-projects.

> *Example*: Suppose that the total value of the NSP block grant to be provided to a village is Afs. 1,000,000. If the Community Development Plan proposes 3 sub-projects (two regular sub-projects plus the woman's sub-project), the total cost (excluding community contributions) of the proposed sub-projects must be **at least** Afs. 1,500,000 (each of the sub-projects costs an average of Afs. 500,000). If the Community Development Plan proposes 4 sub-projects, the total cost (excluding community contributions) of the proposed sub-projects must be **at least** Afs. 1,333,333 (each of the sub-projects costs an average of Afs. 333,333). If the Community Development Plan proposes 5 sub-projects, the total cost of the proposed sub-projects must be **at least** Afs. 1,250,000 (each of the sub-projects costs an average of Afs. 250,000). If the Community Development Plan proposes 6 sub-projects, the total cost (excluding community contributions) of the proposed sub-projects must be **at least** Afs. 1,200,000 (each of the sub-projects costs an average of Afs. 200,000).

The reason for this requirement is to ensure that the sub-project selection procedure is meaningful - that is, villagers are given the opportunity to actually choose the sub-project(s) that they collectively prefer, rather than this choice being made by the CDC in the Community Development Plan. Social Organizers must ensure that the CDC is well-informed of this requirement and also ensure that the Community Development Plan includes more sub-projects than can be funded by the block grant from

[70] The sub-project identified by women will not be subject to the selection procedures described below and will be targeted for Block Grant financing regardless of the results of the selection procedures.

[71] The community contribution can comprise cash, labour, or in-kind contributions such as construction materials and transport. Time spent by CDC members overseeing NSP activities can not be counted towards the community contribution requirement, nor compensated using Block Grant funds. However, community members are free to compensate CDC members for their time through additional contributions.

the NSP program. Social Organizers should also explain to the CDC that it is the community members will decide, either by referendum or consultation meeting, which of the sub-projects proposed in the Community Development Plan are to be selected for funding by the NSP program.

Social Organizers must inform the CDC and members of the community that the rules of the NSP program stipulate that the women's sub-project must be implemented and thus that the women's sub-project will not be included in the Sub-Project Selection Process.

The Community Development Plan should be submitted by the CDC to Social Organizers for examination. When examining the Community Development Plan, Social Organizers must check to make sure that there are at least 3 sub-projects (including the women's sub-project) and the total cost of the proposed sub-projects exceed the value of the NSP block grant by a significant amount (as described above). This will require Social Organizers to find out the estimated cost of each of the proposed sub-projects, the value of the proposed community contribution, and to check that the total value of these sub-projects exceeds the value of the block grant by an amount greater than the average value of the proposed sub-projects. In addition, Social Organizers must ensure that all sub-projects proposed in the Community Development Plan are feasible and meet the sub-project appraisal criteria listed in Disbursement Form 7c.

In the event that the aforementioned requirements of the Community Development Plan are not met, the Social Organizer should explain the procedure again to the CDC and require them to rewrite the Community Development Plan by adding further proposed sub-projects to and/or removing those proposed sub-projects which are not feasible or which do not meet the sub-project appraisal criteria.

D. Secret-Ballot Referendum vs. Consultation Meeting: An Overview

In the 25 villages in the district which are included in the evaluation, one of two different sub-project selection procedures is to be implemented. In 12 (or 13) of the 25 villages, a Secret-Ballot Referendum is to be held to decide which of the sub-projects proposed in the Community Development Plan are to be funded by the NSP program. In the remaining 13 (or 12) villages, a Consultation Meeting is to decide which of the sub-projects proposed in the Community Development Plan are to be funded by the NSP program.

The assignments of which villages will receive a Secret Ballot Referendum and which villages will receive a Consultation Meeting has been made by the Evaluation Team. These assignments are listed in Section E below. To ensure that the evaluation is successful and that the Evaluation Team is able to find out which procedure is most appropriate for the NSP program, it is very important that these assignments are adhered to and that the two procedures are implemented correctly.

A description of the Secret-Ballot Referendum is provided below:

Secret-Ballot Referendum for Sub-Project Selection

In villages in which the sub-projects to be funded by NSP are to be decided by Secret-Ballot Referendum, it is the duty of the Social Organizers to organize a Secret-Ballot Referendum to determine which sub-projects are to be funded by the NSP block grant.

All villagers who were eligible to vote in the election for members of the CDC are also eligible to vote in the Secret-Ballot Referendum for Sub-Project Selection. The date of the Secret-Ballot Referendum is to be set by the Social Organizers, based on consultation with the CDC concerning the expected date of completion of the Community Development Plan. Once the date of the Secret-Ballot Referendum has been set, the date and purpose of the Secret-Ballot Referendum should be communicated to all people in the village by members of the CDC and the Social Organizers. In addition, people in the village must be made aware of the Community Development Plan and the various sub-projects they will be asked to choose between in the Secret-Ballot Referendum. This should occur at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date of the Secret-Ballot Referendum.

In the Secret-Ballot Referendum, villagers will be given a ballot paper on which a number of different sub-projects are listed (and illustrated). The sub-projects listed on the ballot are to be determined by

the CDC and should be the same as those listed in the Community Development Plan. The number of sub-projects listed on the ballot must be at least two. The women's sub-project is not to be included among the options on the ballot paper as it will be automatically funded by a portion of the NSP block grant. The total expected cost (excluding community contributions) of all of the sub-projects listed on the ballot paper must exceed, by a significant margin, the total value of the block grant that will be given to the village by the NSP program.

When voting in the Secret-Ballot Referendum, each villager is to place a mark (or thumb-print) next to the sub-project listed on the ballot paper that they would most prefer to be funded and implemented using the block grant from the NSP program. As in the CDC elections, villagers should cast their vote in private and no one should be able to find out which sub-project they voted for.

Votes cast in the Secret-Ballot Referendum are to be counted by the Social Organizers following the conclusion of voting in order to determine which sub-projects received the most votes. The results of the Secret-Ballot Referendum are to determine which sub-project(s) are funded by the NSP block grant. The sub-project which receives the most votes in the Secret-Ballot Referendum is to be guaranteed funding by the NSP block grant (in addition to the women's sub-project).

If the sub-project which received the most votes in the referendum and the women's sub-project do not fully exhaust the value of the NSP block grant, further sub-projects may be selected for funding based on the results of the referendum. That is, the sub-project which received the second-highest number of votes should be prioritized second for funding, the sub-project that received the third-highest number of votes should be prioritized third, and so on. In order to respect the results of the Secret-Ballot Referendum, it should never be the case that a sub-project which received a low number of votes in the referendum receives funding when a sub-project which received a higher number of votes could be funded and implemented.

A description of the Consultation Meeting is provided below:

Consultation Meeting for Sub-Project Selection

In villages in which the sub-projects to be funded by NSP are to be decided by Consultation Meeting, it is the duty of the Social Organizers to organize a Consultation Meeting to determine which sub-projects are to be funded by the NSP program.

All villagers, regardless of age or any other personal characteristics, are eligible to attend and participate in the Consultation Meeting. The date of the Consultation Meeting is to be set by the Social Organizers, based on consultation with the CDC concerning the expected date of completion of the Community Development Plan. Once the date of the Consultation Meeting has been set, the date and purpose of the Consultation Meeting should be communicated to all people in the village by members of the CDC and the Social Organizers. In addition, people in the village must be made aware of the Community Development Plan and the various sub-projects they will be asked to choose between in the Consultation Meeting. This should occur at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date of the Consultation Meeting.

At the Consultation Meeting, villagers and the CDC members are to decide which sub-projects should be funded by the NSP block grant. At the beginning of the meeting, the CDC members should describe the Community Development Plan and the sub-projects that they are proposing for funding by the NSP program. As with the Secret-Ballot Referendum, the number of sub-projects proposed by the CDC must be at least two (excluding the women's sub-project) and the total expected cost (excluding community contributions) of all of the sub-projects proposed at the Consultation Meeting must exceed, by a significant margin, the total value of the block grant that will be given to the village by the NSP program.

Once the CDC members have described the Community Development Plan and the sub-projects they are proposing for funding, the CDC members and the villagers that are present at the Consultation Meeting should discuss which sub-projects should be funded by the NSP block grant. The purpose of the meeting should be for the CDC members and the villagers to reach a consensus as to which of

those sub-projects proposed by the Community Development Plan are the most important for the community and thus should be funded by the NSP program. Different CDC members and members of the community may express their preference for a particular sub-project and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each proposed sub-project. At the end of the Consultation Meeting, the CDC members and villagers should together decide upon the sub-project or collection of sub-projects that are most appropriate for the NSP block grant to fund. The Social Organizers should make a record of this decision and assist the CDC in submitting proposals for these sub-projects to the NSP.

While every attempt should be made by the CDC members and villagers to reach consensus, in the event that consensus cannot be reached, it will be up to the CDC members to make the final decision as to which of the sub-projects proposed by the Community Development Program should be funded by the NSP block grant.

E. Sub-Project Selection Procedure Assignments

The assignments of which villages will receive a Secret Ballot Referendum and which villages will receive a Consultation Meeting has been made by the Evaluation Team.

To ensure that the evaluation is successful and that the Evaluation Team is able to find out which procedure is most appropriate for the NSP program, it is very important that these assignments are adhered to.

The villages in this district which are to use a Secret-Ballot Referendum to select the sub-project(s) to receive funding from the NSP block grant re listed in the table below:

Secret-Ballot Referendum	
District Name	**Village Name**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	

The villages in this district which are to use a Consultation Meeting to select the sub-project(s) to receive funding from the NSP block grant re listed in the table below:

Consultation Meeting	
District Name	**Village Name**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.

F. Monitoring

In order to ensure that the sub-project selection procedures are administered correctly, monitors hired by the Evaluation Team will observe the sub-project selection procedure in each of the 25 villages in the district that have been surveyed by the evaluation. Following the completion of each sub-project selection observation, the monitors will provide a report to the FP staff, to the NSP office, and to the Evaluation Team about whether the sub-project selection procedures described in this document were adhered to correctly.

SECTION 2: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR ADMINISTERING SUB-PROJECT SELECTION IN EVALUATION DISTRICTS

The following section provides a step-by-step guide to how the Sub-Project Selection Process should occur in the 25 villages. This section is divided up into 4 sub-sections in the order by which they should be carried out in each village: Sub-Section A describes the preparation of the Community Development Plan and the List of Candidate Sub-Projects; Sub-Section B describes the dissemination of information to the village community about the Community Development Plan and the List of Candidate Sub-Projects; Sub-Section C describes the Sub-Project Selection Procedure (either Secret-Ballot Referendum or Consultation Meeting) to be used for selecting sub-projects for funding by NSP Block Grants; and Sub-Section D describes how sub-projects selected through the Sub-Project Selection Procedure should be submitted for funding by NSP Block Grant finances.

Please note that the procedures described in Sub-Sections A, B, and D are the same for all the villages, regardless of whether a Secret-Ballot Referendum or Consultation Meeting is assigned. Only the steps described in the Sub-Section C differ depending on whether the village is assigned a Secret-Ballot Referendum or a Consultation Meeting.

A. Community Development Plan, Women's Sub-Project, and List of Candidate Subprojects

- **Community Development Plan:** In all villages, regardless of whether the village is assigned a Secret-Ballot Referendum or a Consultation Meeting for the Sub-Project Selection Procedure, it is the responsibility of the CDC members to develop a Community Development Plan. The Community Development Plan should be developed following the requirements listed in the Operation Manual drawing upon the "Key Processes" and "Best Practices" identified in Table 3 of the NSP Operational Manual. A key requirement is that the Community Development Plan should be developed based on consultations between members of the CDC and other members of the village community.

  It is important for you to inform the CDC members and the village community that the Community Development Plan only proposes sub-projects for implementation and funding using the NSP block grant, but does make the final decision of which sub-projects will be implemented and funded. The final decision of which sub-projects should be implemented is to be made by the Sub-Project Selection Procedure (either the Secret-Ballot Referendum or the Consultation Meeting). The Community Development Plan does, however, propose the sub-projects that are to be included as options on the ballot of the Secret-Ballot Referendum or, alternatively, will be discussed during the Consultation Meeting.

- **Women's Sub-Project.** During the process of formulating the Community Development Plan, it is the duty of the CDC members and Social Organizers to facilitate a meeting of all of the female members of the village community to discuss and select the Women's Sub-Project. At this meeting, the female members of the community should be able to speak freely and register their priorities. Based on the outcome of their discussion, it is the responsibility of the women present at the meeting to select the Women's Sub-Project that will be included in the Community Development Plan and funded from the NSP block grant. The Women's Sub-Project is **not** included in the Sub-Project Selection Procedure. Rather, it is to be guaranteed funding from the NSP Block Grant.

- **List of Candidate Sub-Projects:** A very important part of the Community Development Plan is the List of Candidate Sub-Projects, which is to be drawn up by the CDC members based on their consultations with members of the village community. All of the sub-projects on the List of Candidate Sub-Projects (excluding the Women's Sub-Project) are to be included in the Sub-Project Selection Procedure (either as options on the voting ballot in the Secret-Ballot Referendum or as proposals to be discussed during the Consultation Meeting).

You should clearly explain to CDC representatives that sub-projects can only receive funding from NSP block grants if they are included in the list of Candidate Subprojects and are selected by the community through the Sub-Project Selection Procedure (either the Secret-Ballot Referendum or Consultation Meeting). You should also explain the requirements that are imposed on the List of Candidate Sub-Projects and that it is best for the CDC members to include a large number of sub-projects (between 5 and 10) in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects in order to allow villagers more choice in the Sub-Project Selection Procedure.

The List of Candidate Sub-Projects must fulfill the following requirements:

- **Minimum of 2 sub-projects plus the Women's Sub-Project** (A high number of sub-projects is desirable in order to give villagers more choice in the Sub-Project Selection Procedure);
- **Total cost of sub-projects** (excluding value of expected community contributions) **exceed the value of the NSP block grant for the village by an amount greater than the average value of the proposed sub-projects** (see Sub-Section C of Section 1 for examples);
- **All sub-projects are meaningful and likely to be desired by the community members**;
- **None of the sub-projects appear on the "Negative List" in the NSP Operational Manual**;
- **All sub-projects are technically feasible and are eligible for financing by NSP block grants according to the rules of the NSP program, as described in the NSP Operational Manual and in Disbursement Form 7c**.

You will have to be very careful in ensuring that the List of Candidate Sub-Projects included in the Community Development Plan meets these three requirements. Thus, you will have to find out the estimated cost of each of the proposed sub-projects and the value of the proposed community contributions to each proposed sub-project. Once this information has been obtained, you check that the total value of all of the sub-projects (excluding the proposed community contributions) included in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects exceeds the value of the block grant by an amount greater than the average value of the proposed sub-projects.

You must also ensure that all sub-projects proposed in the Community Development Plan are feasible, meet the sub-project appraisal criteria listed in Disbursement Form 7c, and do not appear in the "Negative List" in the NSP Operational Manual. In addition, all of the sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should be meaningful and desirable – **you must be careful to ensure that the CDC members do not attempt to manipulate the Sub-Project Selection Procedure by adding sub-projects that the community are unlikely to vote for and thereby 'fixing' the results of the Sub-Project Selection Procedure**.

In the event that these requirements are not met, you should explain the procedure again to the CDC and require them to rewrite the List of Candidate Sub-Projects by adding further proposed sub-projects to and/or removing those proposed sub-projects which are not meaningful, desirable, and/or feasible or which do not meet the sub-project appraisal criteria.

B. Information Dissemination & Outreach

In order to ensure that the members of the village community are able to participate in the Sub-Project Selection Process, it is important that the CDC members and the Social Organizers provide information to the village community about the Community Development Plan and the List of Candidate Sub-Projects. In particular, members of the village community should be informed about the description and expected cost of each of the sub-projects on the List of Candidate Sub-Projects. Members of the village community should also be informed about the total value of the Block Grant that the village will receive from the NSP program, about the nature of the Sub-Project Selection Procedure (either Secret-Ballot Referendum or Consultation Meeting), and about the consequences of the Sub-Project Selection Procedure (for example, if there are 8 sub-projects proposed in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects, but the value of the block grant and the expected community contributions

can only fund 5 of these sub-projects, then villagers should be informed that the 5 sub-projects that are selected through the Sub-Project Selection Procedure will be funded through the NSP block grant and community contributions).

Following the completion of the Community Development Plan and the List of Candidate Sub-Projects and at least one week prior to the Sub-Project Selection Procedure, Social Organizers and the CDC members should hold a meeting with members of the community to describe the Sub-Project Selection Procedure for that village and the choices that the villagers will have during the Sub-Project Selection Procedure. The meeting should discuss the following matters:

- Description of the Community Development Plan;
- Description of the List of Candidate Sub-Projects, including a detailed description of each proposed sub-project and the cost of each proposed sub-project;
- Value of the NSP Block Grant for the village;
- Explain that the Sub-Project Selection Procedure gives the community the opportunity to decide (from the List of Candidate Sub-Projects) which sub-projects are to be funded by the NSP program and that the results of the Sub-Project Selection Procedure will be binding upon the CDC:
    - If the village has been assigned a Secret-Ballot Referendum, it should be explained that each villager will have the opportunity to vote, in private, for the sub-project that they prefer and that the sub-projects with the most votes will be selected for funding and implementation through the NSP program;
    - If the village has been assigned a Consultation Meeting, it should be explained that a Consultation Meeting will be held during which all villagers will have the opportunity to explain to other members of the village community which sub-projects they feel are best. At the end of this meeting, community members and CDC members will decided together, based on consensus, which sub-projects should be selected for funding and implementation.;
- Date of Secret-Ballot Referendum or Consultation Meeting.

In addition, Social Organizers and CDC members should post the Community Development Plan and the List of Candidate Sub-Projects (with drawings of the projects, where feasible, to assist illiterate villagers in understanding the sub-projects) in a public place. This way, villagers can come and study the List of Candidate Sub-Projects and discuss their preferred sub-projects with others in the village before the Sub-Project Selection Procedure. The posting of the Community Development Plan and List of Candidate Sub-Projects and the meeting to describe the Sub-Project Selection Procedure should take place at least one week before the Secret-Ballot Referendum or Consultation Meeting.

C. Sub-Project Selection Procedure (Secret-Ballot Referendum or Consultation Meeting)

As noted above, the Evaluation Team has selected which of the 25 villages included in the evaluation are to select sub-projects for NSP funding using a Secret-Ballot Referendum and which villages are to select sub-projects for NSP funding using a Consultation Meeting. The Sub-Project Selection Procedure that each village will receive is listed in the table below:

Sub-Project Selection Procedure Assignments for 25 Villages Surveyed by Evaluation Team

Secret-Ballot Referendum		Consultation Meeting

Please note that only those villages assigned to the Secret-Ballot Referendum in the table above should use a referendum, or other method of private voting, to determine which sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should be funded by the NSP program. Likewise, only those villages assigned to the Consultation Meeting in the table above should use a meeting, or other consultative procedure, to determine which sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should be funded by the NSP program.

A detailed description of how the two Sub-Project Selection Procedures are to be administered is provided below:

i. Secret-Ballot Referendum

The Secret-Ballot Referendum is to be organized exactly in the same way as the CDC election process and is to follow all the procedures described in the "Election Procedures in Evaluation Villages". All of the villagers that were eligible to vote in the CDC election are eligible to vote in the Secret-Ballot Referendum. The obvious difference is that, in the Secret-Ballot Referendum, voters are to place a check-mark (or thumb-print) next to the one sub-project on the List of Candidate Sub-Projects that they would most like to see funded by the NSP block grant.

The following procedures should be adhered to in preparing and administering the Secret-Ballot Referendum:

Ballot Papers: Prior to the administration of the referendum, the ballot papers should be prepared. The ballot papers for each village should contain the following information:

- The direction, "Please place a mark next to the sub-project that you would most like to see implemented in the village using funding from the NSP program?"
- A description of all of the sub-projects included in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects, with a picture or image (to assist illiterate voters in identifying their preferred sub-project) and the cost of that sub-project next to the description;
- A blank space next to the description of each sub-project where voters can place a mark.

Clusters: As with the CDC election, voting in the referendum must be organized by clusters. The same clusters that were used in the CDC elections should be used in the referendum. Each cluster should have a male and female polling station where villagers come to cast their votes.

Voter Registration: All of the villagers that were eligible to vote in the CDC elections are eligible to vote in the Secret-Ballot Referendum. Therefore, the Eligible Voter Registration List that was used in the CDC elections to determine which villagers are eligible to vote should be used during the Secret-Ballot Referendum to determine which voters are eligible to vote.

Administration of Secret-Ballot Referendum: The same procedures applied in the administration of the CDC election should be applied in the administration of the Secret-Ballot Referendum. Thus, each cluster in the village should have separate polling stations for men and women. In addition, the polling stations should be designed in such a manner as to

allow each voter to make their selection in private, so that no one else can see the sub-project that the select on the ballot paper. The polling stations should be located in a central location in each cluster.

On the day of the election, at least one male and one female Social Organizer and/or FP Staff should be present at each polling station from the time the polling stations open in the morning until the time they close in the afternoon. Social Organizers and/or FP staff-members present at the polling station must have the Eligible Voter Registration List for that cluster so that they can allow voters to sign next to their name on the list to indicate that they have been given the opportunity to make their vote. Neither the Social Organizers, the FP Staff, nor anyone else should inspect the votes that have been cast until the polling station has closed and the formal counting of the votes has begun.

Voting Process: Members of the village community vote in the following manner:

- Upon arrival at the polling station, villagers should approach the Social Organizer and/or FP staff-member present and tell them their name, age, and name of father (or husband);
- The Social Organizer and/or FP staff-member should check the thumb of the person to ensure that he or she hasn't already voted;
- The Social Organizer and/or FP staff-member should find the person on the Eligible Voter Registration List and ask them to sign (or, if illiterate, make a thumbprint) next to their name on the list;
- In the event that the person's name is not on the list, the person must not be allowed to vote. It is possible, for instance, that the person has gone to the wrong polling station. In this case, please direct the person to the polling station of the cluster that they are assigned to;
- Once the eligible voter's name has been found and their signature or thumbprint recorded, they should be given a pen and ballot paper and asked to step inside the polling station;
- Once inside the polling station, the voter is to mark one and only one sub-project on the ballot paper that they would most like to see implemented using funds from the NSP program;
- If an eligible voter is illiterate and unable to mark their choice on the ballot paper (this is unlikely, however, as pictures of each proposed sub-project will be printed on the ballot paper), they may ask for assistance from a family member, one of the Social Organizers and/or FP staff-members, or one of the respected people in the village. When providing assistance, such persons must be careful not to influence the choice of the voter and to represent the voter's choice accurately on the ballot paper;
- Once the voter has marked their choice on the ballot paper, they should fold the ballot paper over so that no one can see the writing on it, step outside the polling station, and place the ballot paper in the ballot box;
- Once a person has voted, his thumb should be colored with a marker pen to show that he/she has already voted;
- Voters should be informed that votes will be counted immediately after the casting of ballots has been completed. Results will be communicated via public notice boards and, if applicable, via the speakers of local Mosques.

The ballot box should be kept with the Social Organizer and/or FP staff-member at all times in order to prevent mischief. The ballot box is to be locked and should only be opened at the end of the day for the counting of the election results.

In the event that women are unable to walk to the polling station to make their votes, it may be necessary to take the ballot box to the dwelling in which they live to collect their votes. This should be done at the end of the day, after the men living in the cluster have made their votes at the polling station, but before the ballot boxes have been opened and the counting of votes has started.

At least 50 percent of eligible voters must vote for the Secret-Ballot Referendum to be valid. In the event that less than 50 percent of eligible voters participate in the Secret-Ballot Referendum, a new Secret-Ballot Referendum date must be set for one week later and the CDC must engage in renewed publicity efforts to ensure the turnout for the second Secret-Ballot Referendum reaches 50 percent. In the event that the second Secret-Ballot Referendum fails to breach the 50 percent threshold, the FP concerned should contact the Evaluation Team and NSP office for further directions.

If the CDC has any concerns about the results of the Secret-Ballot Referendum, these should be addressed to the FP and, if the FP deems that these concerns are worthy of serious consideration, they should in turn be communicated to the Evaluation Team and the NSP office.

Counting of Votes: Once all of the eligible voters in the village have been given the opportunity to cast their votes, Social Organizers and FP staff-members should carry the locked ballot boxes to a central location in the village where the villagers can gather to observe the counting of the election results. The ballot boxes from each cluster should be counted separately, with the results from each cluster being recorded on the "Cluster Vote Count Form". The counting of the votes should proceed with one Social Organizer and/or FP staff-member removing the votes from the ballot box and announcing the sub-project marked on the ballot and another Social Organizer and/or FP staff-member recording the subproject marked on the ballot on a piece of paper.

Selection of Sub-Projects: Once the votes have been counted in each cluster and the number of votes that each sub-project received in each cluster recorded on the Cluster Vote Count Forms, the voting results from all of the clusters should be added up to make a total for the whole village. The total number of votes that each sub-project received in the village should be recorded on the "Village Vote Count Form". Once this form has been filled out, please rank sub-projects according to the number of votes they receive in the referendum. The sub-projects with the highest rank (and highest number of votes) are to be selected for funding using the NSP Block Grant. The number of sub-projects selected for funding using the NSP Block Grant should be such that the Block Grant is used completely. It should never be the case that a subproject with lower rank is targeted for Block Grant financing if a subproject with a higher rank can be targeted for Block Grant financing.

> ***Example:*** In order to demonstrate how sub-projects should be selected based on the results of the Secret-Ballot Referendum, please examine two hypothetical election results presented in the table below. In both villages the size of the block grant is Afs. 1,200,000 and the Women's Sub-Project costs Afs. 200,000. In both villages there are 4 sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects (and thus 4 sub-projects listed on the ballot paper). In both villages sub-projects 1 and 2 are the most popular, followed by subproject 3 and subproject 4.
>
> In Village 1, the total cost of the Women's Sub-Project and the 3 sub-projects that received the most votes is Afs. 1,200,000. As this is the same as the amount of the block grant, Sub-Projects 1, 2, and 3 should receive funding from the NSP block grant.
>
> In Village 2, the total cost of the Women's Sub-Project and the 3 sub-projects that received the most votes is Afs. 1,300,000, which is more than the amount of the Block grant. In this situation, the 3 most popular projects cannot all receive funding from the block grant. In this situation, there are two options. The first option is for the community to contribute the extra Afs. 100,000 so that the total amount of financing for the first 3 sub-projects equals the size of the block grant. The second option is to for sub-project 4 to receive funding instead of sub-project 3. In this case, the required funding from the NSP equals Afs. 1,200,000, which is exactly the amount of the block grant. In this case, the Social Organizers, FP staff, and CDC members should make a decision as to which option is most appropriate. Please note, however, that it should never be the case that a sub-project with less votes receives a funding instead of a sub-

project with more votes when the sub-project with more votes could have implemented with the block grant.

Hypothetical Referendum Results

Village 1		
	Number of votes	Amount (AFA) from NSP
Subproject 1	239	300,000
Subproject 2	134	500,000
Subproject 3	98	200,000
Subproject 4	54	200,000

Village 2		
	Number of votes	Amount (AFA) from NSP
Subproject 1	196	500,000
Subproject 2	158	300,000
Subproject 3	87	300,000
Subproject 4	49	200,000

In the unlikely event that two or more projects receive the same number of votes in the referendum procedure, the tie can be broken through one of the two procedures. The first option is to organize another referendum in which the members of community vote to select only between the tied projects, with the one that receives the most votes being targeted for Block Grant financing. The second option is to let the members of CDC decide the sub-projects which are to receive funding from the NSP block-grant.

Announcement of Selected Sub-Projects: Once the votes of the Secret-Ballot Referendum have been fully counted and the winning sub-projects selected, the Social Organizers, FP staff-members, and the CDC members should announce the results of the Secret-Ballot Referendum (including the number of votes each proposed sub-project received) and which sub-projects have been selected for funding using the block grant. The results and selected sub-projects should be announced to the whole village community in a central part of the village. Following this announcement, please fill out the "Selected Sub-Projects Form".

ii. Consultation Meeting

All villagers, regardless of age, gender, or any other personal characteristics, are eligible to attend and participate in the Consultation Meeting. The purpose of the Consultation Meeting is for members of the village community to discuss and debate the costs and benefits of sub-projects proposed in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects and agree on which of these sub-projects should be selected for funding from the NSP block grant. Logistical arrangements for the meeting are to be organized both by the Social Organizers and the members of the Community Development Council, but the meeting itself should be run by the members of the Community Development Council. Social Organizers and/or other staff of the Facilitating Partner may wish to make a brief introduction at the beginning of the meeting and may choose to observe the Consultation Meeting, but they should not become involved at all in the discussion or seek to direct the meeting in any manner.

The aim of the meeting is to build a consensus among members of the village community as to which of the sub-projects proposed in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should be selected for funding by the NSP block grant. During the meeting, opportunity should be given to members of the CDC and to other members of the village community to explain why they believe a particular sub-project should be selected for funding. At the conclusion of discussion, the CDC members and villagers at the meeting should together decide upon the sub-project or collection of sub-projects that are most appropriate for the NSP block grant to fund. The Social Organizers should make a record of this decision. In the event that a consensus cannot be reached at the Consultation Meeting, the CDC members are to have the final decision on which sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should be selected for funding by the NSP block grant.

The following procedures should be adhered to in preparing and administering the Secret-Ballot Referendum:

- All villagers, regardless of age, gender, or any other personal characteristics, should be invited by the Social Organizers, FP staff, and members of the Community Development Council to the Consultation Meeting.
- The meeting is to be convened by the CDC and should be moderated by one or more CDC representatives.
- At the beginning of the Consultation Meeting, one or more members of the CDC (and/or the Social Organizers of FP staff) should explain that the purpose of the Consultation Meeting is for the village community to decide which of the sub-projects included in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should be selected for funding by the NSP block grant. The decision should be based on a consensus reached at the Consultation Meeting through discussion and debate. It should also be explained that only sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects may be selected for funding by the NSP program.
- Once the purpose of the Consultation Meeting has been explained, one or more members of the CDC must describe in detail the sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects. The cost and type of required community contribution of each sub-project must be noted, as well as the expected value of the block grant that will be disbursed by the NSP program. It should be explained by the CDC members that the combined cost of the sub-projects selected for NSP funding should not exceed the value of the NSP block grant plus required community contributions.
- While it is important that the Women's Sub-Project is described during the Consultation Meeting, it should be explained that the funding of the Women's Sub-Project is required by the rules of the NSP program and, as such, there will not be discussion of whether the Women's Sub-Project should be implemented.
- If there are any major considerations (such as seasonal factors, the availability of material, or critical needs of the village community) which the CDC members believe the village community should take into consideration when deciding which sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should be selected for funding, CDC members should explain these to the community.
- Once the CDC members have explained the purpose of the meeting, described the sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects, and noted any major considerations that they feel should influence the selection procedure, discussion should be held among the villagers attending the meeting to decide which sub-projects in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should be selected for funding using the NSP block grant. The way in which this discussion is organized is to be decided by the CDC members. One option is to have the CDC members express their opinions first and then invite responses from villagers at the Consultation Meeting. Alternatively, the CDC members may ask villagers to speak first before giving their opinion. In any event, the purpose of the discussion at the Consultation Meeting should be to reach common agreement among both the CDC members and the villagers about which sub-projects on the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should receive funding from the NSP block grant.
- All persons who attend the meeting are eligible to participate in the Consultation Meeting and express their opinion of which sub-project(s) in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects should be selected for funding by the NSP program.
- In order to reach consensus at the Consultation Meeting, CDC members may employ informal points-of-procedure (such as a show-of-hands) at their discretion. However, **no formal or binding vote to decide which sub-projects should be selected for funding are to be held before, during, or after the meeting**.
- Following the end of the Consultation Meeting, the CDC members should meet privately to decide upon the final list of sub-projects that are to be selected for funding using the NSP block grant, known as the List of Selected Sub-Projects. In the event that n o

consensus was reached at the Consultation Meeting, the CDC should select those sub-projects for funding which received the most support from villagers at the Consultation Meeting.

- In the event that a consensus is able to be reached at the Consultation Meeting, the CDC should announce the List of Selected Sub-Projects to villagers at the conclusion of the Consultation Meeting.
- In the event that consensus is unable to be reached at the Consultation Meeting, the CDC members may decide to deliberate among themselves in the hours or days following the meeting to determine the final list. The List of Selected Sub-Projects should be decided upon and announced to the community not more than 3 days following the Consultation Meeting.
- The List of Selected Sub-Projects should be submitted by the CDC to the Social Organizers and staff of the Facilitating Partner. The Social Organizers and staff of the Facilitating Partner should check to ensure that there are all sub-projects included in the List of Selected Sub-Projects are also in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects. The CDC should understand that the List of Selected Sub-Projects will be considered final subject to the listed sub-projects meeting the technical criteria outlined by the NSP Operational Manual.
- If a villager has any concerns about the results of the Consultation Meeting, these should be addressed to the FP and, if the FP deems that these concerns represent serious consideration, they should in turn be communicated to the Evaluation Team and the NSP office.

D. Submission of Subprojects

Once the Sub-Project Selection Procedure has finished and the sub-projects to be selected for funding using the NSP block grant have been decided, the List of Selected Sub-Projects should be sent both to the Evaluation Team and the NSP office.

In the event that the Sub-Project Selection Procedure results in the selection of sub-project(s) which are infeasible or unadvisable due to seasonal conditions, availability of materials, or other serious extenuating circumstances such as security issues, the FP may exercise its discretion to, in conjunction with the CDC, overrule the results of the Sub-Project Selection Procedure. Given the consequences of such a decision for community morale, this option should be exercised sparingly and only when absolutely necessary. Decisions to change the results of the Sub-Project Selection Procedure should be communicated to the Evaluation Team and the NSP office, complete with a description of the rationale underlying the decision, the consultation process with the CDC, and all relevant information concerning community reaction. In addition, the Social Organizers, FP staff, and CDC should organize a public meeting to notify the community of the decision, to explain the rationale behind the decision, and to address community concerns or complaints.

C. Reporting

The Evaluation Team requests that the following information be collected and submitted following the completion of the Sub-Project Selection Procedure.

For all NSP Evaluation Communities:

1. List of Candidate Sub-Projects – List, description, estimated total cost, estimated community contribution, and estimated NSP contribution for all sub-projects included in the List of Candidate Sub-Projects developed as a part of the Community Development Plan.
2. List of Selected Sub-Projects – Finalized list, description, estimated total cost, estimated community contribution, and estimated NSP contribution for all sub-projects selected by the

Sub-Project Selection Procedure (either by Secret-Ballot Referendum or Consultation Meeting).

For all NSP Evaluation Communities with Secret-Ballot Referendum:

1. Blank Ballot Paper – Copy of voting ballot paper used for the Secret-Ballot Referendum in the village.
2. Cluster Vote Count Form – Count of total number of votes received by each sub-project listed in the voting ballot paper for each cluster in the village.
3. Village Vote Count Form – Count of total number of votes received by each sub-project listed in the voting ballot paper for the whole village (sum of votes from all of the clusters).
4. Secret-Ballot Referendum Log or Diary – To support the evaluation, it would be nice if Social Organizers could keep a log or diary of anecdotes and stories documenting community reaction to the administration of the referendum. This may include any incidents that occur during the election process, as well as general notes on community sentiment as perceived by the Social Organizer, and comments and suggestions expressed to the Social Organizer by community members, CDC members, or government representatives.

For NSP Evaluation Communities with Consultation Meeting:

1. Minutes of Consultation Meeting – Minutes of Consultation Meeting, as recorded by Social Organizer of FP staff.
2. Consultation Meeting Log or Diary – To support the evaluation, it would be nice if Social Organizers could keep a log or diary of anecdotes and stories documenting the proceedings of the Consultation Meeting and community reaction to the event.

D. Monitoring

In order to ensure that the Sub-Project Selection Procedures are conducted as described in the above sections, the Evaluation Team, support staff, and representatives of the NSP office will conduct regular monitoring of Sub-Project Selection Procedures in the 25 NSP Evalation Communities in the district. This monitoring will include observance of Secret-Ballot Referendums and Consultation Meetings; interviews with community members, CDC representatives; and inspection of the counting of votes cast in the Secret-Ballot Referendum. Following the completion of each observation, the Sub-Project Selection Procedure Monitors will provide a report to the FP staff, the NSP office, and to the Evaluation Team about whether the Sub-Project Selection Procedures were implemented correctly in each village.